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TORIAL

NCLEARING THE AIR

The Reagan Administration is spoiling for a fight over the upcoming Congressional renewal of the Clean Air Act. The Administration's preliminary proposals would return the United States to the pre-1970 period, before the act took effect.

Among the major revisions proposed, the most dramatic and most troubling center on the elimination of specific goals and deadlines for reducing pollution in areas of the country with dirty air. The states would be given wider latitude in determining how or even when to clean up polluted air, and the Environmental Protection Agency would no longer be required to promulgate an alternative plan for states that have failed to devise one of their own.

In addition, the Reagan proposal in its current form would repeal the so-called secondary air quality standards, which protect America's agriculture from environmental damage; it would permit the states unilaterally to relax pollution-control requirements for industry, which would very likely set off a process in which industrial growth will go to the state that is the dirtiest bidder. The revisions would not address the problem of acid rain. And they would roll back auto-pollution standards, allowing future cars to pollute more than many do today.

Even the most ardent environmentalists concede that the Clean Air Act needs some serious fine tuning. But that delicate exercise will be difficult given the Administration's blunderbuss approach. Environmentalists in Congress, such as Senator Robert Stafford and Representative Henry Waxman, the respective chairmen of the Senate and House committees on the environment, must offer strong counterproposals. A recent Harris poll showed that 86 percent of the American people want the Clean Air Act to be retained as is, or even strengthened.

THE TOPPLING OF BANI-SADR
Sharif Arani

ART FUNDING FOR ARTISTS
E.L. Doctorow

LETTER FROM POLAND
Gustaw Moszcz

THE BRITISH TRIDENT
Robert C. Aldridge

NOTES FROM OUR GULAG
Sue M. Halpern

RAYMOND CARVER
Robert Houston

AM A'S SHOOT-OUT

MAGAZINE MERCHANTS OF DEATH

ALAN WOLFE

Americans have not been gazing into a particularly flattering mirror lately. Are we to believe that Dennis Sweeney, Mark Chapman and John Hinckley more accurately reflect our culture than Allard Lowenstein, John Lennon and Ronald Reagan? D. H. Lawrence thought so. "The American soul," he wrote in 1923, "is hard, isolate, stoic, and a killer." That notion is not precisely what we celebrate with Fourth of July fireworks but the explosion of gun and mercenary publications on the magazine racks of this country suggests that Lawrence may not have been far off the mark.

Some dozen publications are now available at neighborhood newsstands to instruct and encourage the trigger-happy. There appear to be quite a few of them. *Shooting Times*, for example, has a circulation of 185,000. *Soldier of Fortune* boasts 200,000, up 70,000 over last year. Besides such periodicals, gun enthusiasts have easy access to the five publications the National Rifle Association publishes for its 1.9 million members. These include the *American Rifleman* and a special magazine just for itchy young folk called *NRA Junior*. In all, it is safe to estimate that during any given week several million readers are poring over these manuals of death.

Destruction, in all its manifold ways, is the theme of these magazines. Join the Military Book Club (any three selections for only 98 cents) and read *The Complete Book of Wargames, Fighter!* or *Messerschmitt BF 109*. Mastercharge and Visa are accepted by the Carwin Action Library, "specialist booksellers of aircraft, armor, auto, militaria, marine, naval

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LETTERS.

THE ANTI-LEFEVER COALITION

Chicago

Aryeh Neier, in analyzing the defeat of Ernest Lefever's nomination ["The Lessons of Victory," *The Nation*, June 20], noted the key role of Senate Foreign Relations Committee leaders Charles Percy and Claiborne Pell. We would add to this insight a point we assumed in planning our campaign to defeat the nomination. Although an unfavorable personal reaction by Senator Percy, a decent man, was likely following Lefever's statements, we felt that no Senator acts in a political vacuum. We knew that grass-roots opposition would need to be mobilized within Percy's home state of Illinois if he was to take the historic step of opposing a President from his party.

Clergy and Laity Concerned therefore organized a grass-roots petition campaign in Illinois. C.A.L.C. was also invited to testify before the Foreign Relations Committee. When we did, we presented it signatures of more than 1,000 Illinois clergy and lay religious leaders opposing the nomination. Grass-roots efforts were also mounted by groups in the home states of other undecided Republican Senators on the committee, including Nancy Kassebaum, Charles Mathias and Rudy Boschwitz. These efforts, we feel, made it possible for them to join Percy in opposing the nomination.

As one of the organizations "smeared" publicly by Lefever, we believe that groups focusing on specific issues can have a major impact on U.S. foreign policy. The defeat of his nomination illustrates one way in which the human-rights constituency to which Neier refers was activated. That was the importance of beating Ernest. *Ron Freund*
Norman Watkins
Clergy and Laity Concerned

THE P.L.O. AND LEBANON

Chevy Chase, Md.

I must acknowledge a sneaking respect for Nubar Hovsepian ["The Lebanon Quagmire," *The Nation*, June 6]. It is not easy to write a seemingly objective article on the "underlying causes of the civil strife in Lebanon" and not mention that the Palestine Liberation Organization (P.L.O.):

(*1*) controls armed forces in that nation probably more numerous and surely more powerful than the Lebanese Army;

(*2*) controls and governs areas of Lebanon that are virtually imperialist enclaves, disregarding the welfare and independence of its "host," just as it disregarded the welfare and independence of Jordan before being driven from that Arab country;

(*3*) uses Lebanon as a base for attacks on Israel against the wishes of most Lebanese and despite their President's appeals to the P.L.O. and to Arab leaders.

The alliance of the P.L.O. and the Lebanese National Movement attempted to dominate Lebanon and make untenable the position of the Christian community (about 45 to 55 percent of the population). Syria stepped in to curb them, not for fear of a secular democracy but because an alliance victory, for a number of reasons, endangered their military position. The talk of secular democracy as a goal is mainly rhetoric. The supporters of the alliance are backed by totalitarian regimes and have worked closely with such regimes. The P.L.O.'s perfervid endorsement of the Iranian fundamentalists is just one of many signs of what an alliance victory might have meant.

Hovsepian says the late Kamal Jumblatt referred to the campaign for a "secular democracy" as his country's "1789 in the making." I do not question Kamal Jumblatt's sincerity by mentioning that he was a chief leader of the alliance. Quoting him in this context is like quoting Maj. Saad Haddad to the effect that his anti-alliance army is the hope for an independent Lebanon free of Palestinian and Syrian interlopers.

Theodore Wilentz

HOVSEPIAN REPLIES

New York City

Theodore Wilentz seems to feel that I deliberately obscured some aspects of the Lebanese civil war—specifically, the role of the Palestine Liberation Organization. There are a number of things I didn't mention, because they seemed both obvious and elementary. First, the Palestinians did not come to Lebanon gratuitously. Their presence in Lebanon since 1948 is the direct result of their eviction from Palestine and the establishment of the Zionist entity—Israel. Second, the P.L.O. was not formed until 1964, long after the civil wars of 1840, 1860 and 1958. In other words, my aim in the article was to identify the systemic causes of civil war in Lebanon that are directly derived from the sectarian (confessional) system. Third, the formation of the P.L.O. was instrumental in lifting the arbitrary and repressive regulations imposed on the Palestinians by the secret service of Lebanon, the Deuxieme Bureau. Hence, to the Palestinian, the formation of the P.L.O. was a sign of self-assertion, dignity and pride. Fourth, Palestinian armed presence in Lebanon was agreed upon through the Cairo Accords of 1969 and its amendments (Melcart) in the 1970s.

The Lebanese Army did not serve the function of guaranteeing national sovereignty; instead, it was used as a tool for internal repression, such as the quelling of workers' strikes. Hence, the Lebanese National Movement (L.N.M.) and particularly the Movement of the Deprived (headed by Imam Musa Sadr of the Shiite community) demanded that they be armed to counter Israeli aggression against their villages and civilians. Simply, a Lebanese-Palestinian alliance was formed to protect their respective and mutual interests, and to defend the people from Israeli attacks. Wilentz's claim that the P.L.O. (and the L.N.M. by implication) "disregard" the welfare of the Lebanese is simply and totally incorrect.

For Wilentz it should be noted that the L.N.M., which includes both Christians and Moslems, is not a Moslem front that seeks to make the Christian community's position untenable. Moreover, as I expressed in my article, there is *no one force* that represents the "Christians," despite Phalangist and Israeli claims. And I submit that those of us who witnessed the development of the L.N.M. are more capable of assessing whether or not the quest for democratic secularism was genuine or mere "rhetoric." Let me say that as an Armenian from the Middle East, I find the goal of secular democracy—as represented by the program and aspirations of the L.N.M.—more effective and tangible in safeguarding the rights of all minorities (religious and national), as contrasted to the example of Israel's theocracy.

Two final points: As Wilentz recognizes in his final comment, Major Haddad is nothing short of an Israeli puppet. By contrast, however, Kamal Jumblatt was a genuine leader, respected by his people, who seriously aspired for their "1789." Second, Wilentz mentions the P.L.O.'s support for the "Iranian fundamentalists." He could have said that the P.L.O. supported the Iranian people's quest to overthrow the Shah, at a time when Israel supported the Shah's dreaded Savak forces. It is interesting that his allusion to this support as a sign of some dark totalitarian menace that is never spelled out is precisely the form that the ideology of the New Right—and the Federal Bureau of Investigation's charges and innuendos—have taken. Such remarks not only reflect but reinforce the American public's ill-informed, vague and racist notions of the new totalitarian threat—i.e., all those who would resist the U.S. claim to define the words "freedom" and "independence" for the world's people.

Regrettably, I cannot express even "sneaking respect" for Wilentz's tunnel vision explanation that is at best 180 degrees off the mark. *Nubar Hovsepian*

The Nation welcomes letters—typed, double-spaced and no longer than 300 words, please. Longer letters may be edited for reasons of space. Our policy is to publish as many letters as space permits, but inevitably a backlog develops, so bear with us.

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EDITORIALS.

Ominous Turn

The dictatorship of the mullahs seems to have, at least for now, triumphed in Iran. A power struggle has been resolved and the revolution has begun to consume its own. President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, impeached by his clerical enemies in the Parliament, went underground sometime after June 11, when Ayatollah Khomeini stripped him of his position as Commander in Chief of the Army. [See Sharif Arani's analysis of Bani-Sadr's downfall on page 9.] He went into hiding, as did some of his aides, including, we have learned from sources in Teheran, Mansour Farhang, his foreign policy adviser and a man whom millions of Americans knew as the only articulate and compassionate Iranian spokesman during the 444-day hostage crisis, when he served as Iran's U.N. Ambassador. He and Bani-Sadr, together with many others, probably sought the protection of two armed guerrilla organizations, the Islamic socialist People's Mujahedeen and the Marxist Fedayeen Khalq; both organizations have announced that they will mount an armed resistance to the clerics now in power.

As we celebrate our own 205th year of independence, let us review Iran's struggle to free itself from a tyrannical king and consolidate its new nationhood. One way to do this is

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through the lens of *Nation* editorials over the past two and a half years.

When Bani-Sadr was elected the Islamic Republic's first President in January 1980, we expressed the hope that this Parisian-trained economist would best his clerical rivals in the Islamic Republican Party, halt the summary execution of "counterrevolutionaries," gays, Jews, Bahais and others, and end the repression of religious and ethnic minorities such as the Kurds, Turkomans and Baluchis. We had, however, no illusions about Bani-Sadr. Our own Kai Bird reported from Teheran as early as May 1979, "If Khomeini's version of the Constitution is ratified, he and his closest advisers, a clique of ideological conservatives led by Foreign Minister Dr. Ibrahim Yazdi, broadcast chief Sadegh Ghotbzadeh and economist Hassan Bani-Sadr, will have succeeded in excluding the democratic left from the political arena." As Fred Halliday reported in February 1980: "Nor is there much love lost between [Bani-Sadr] and the left, despite his radical economic policies. He was an ardent supporter of the closing of the left-wing daily *Ayandegan* last August and slanderously accused its editors of being associates of the old regime."

It is thus somewhat ironic that Bani-Sadr is now dependent on the Mujahedeen and other leftist groups. Last spring, Bani-Sadr stopped baiting the left and sought to forge a broader alliance of the leftist Islamic parties with secular groups in Teheran. But by then it was too late.

Now the Ayatollah Mohammed Beheshti is free to consolidate his power base as Chief Justice and head of the Islamic Republican Party. Beheshti is bidding to inherit the religious mantle of Khomeini, whose health is still considered very poor. His current victory over Bani-Sadr is actually viewed with equanimity by the Reagan Administration. Our former ambassador to Iran, William Sullivan, describes Beheshti as the most capable and politically astute of the clerics. But if Washington policy makers believe Beheshti will "stabilize" revolutionary Iran, they are almost certainly going to be disappointed.

The situation is still extremely fluid, and Beheshti has his own personal liabilities which could make his political future rather precarious. Until the revolution, Beheshti had lived in West Germany as a semiofficial patriarch, serving the religious needs of Iranian expatriates in Germany. In that high-profile capacity he had to be carefully watched by Savak; indeed, Beheshti was no exile. He traveled freely to and from Iran during the Pahlevi reign. One high-ranking Iranian diplomat told *The Nation*, "When I came to the foreign ministry offices once in the '60s, I saw Beheshti there; I made inquiries about the man. I believe he must have been reporting to Savak."

The decisively repressive turn Khomeini and his regime have taken shows that nationalist revolutions (which is what occurred in Iran in February 1979) are not automatically progressive. Many Iranians who were committed to democratic principles and egalitarian economic development lost their lives in the revolution. Many more lives will probably be lost in the coming months. We should not be surprised if the struggle is a bloody one.

We Hold These Truths to Be Self-Evident

Or, A List of Things to Believe if You Want to Be Accepted by the (New) Right Crowd in Washington.

The rich are superior to other people; otherwise they wouldn't be rich.

People who are tortured by governments we consider friendly should not embarrass us by talking about it.

Mr. Darwin had a theory, but the Bible tells us that the first human being on earth was Adam, and he named all the animals.

Guns don't kill people; people kill people. That is why we register cars but not guns.

When a corporation gets a tax cut, it invests the money to create new jobs; it does not use it to increase dividends or sweeten short-term profits.

Even though tobacco is a health hazard we should use tax dollars to subsidize farmers who grow it.

Just because World War II made battleships obsolete doesn't mean they are obsolete today.

Reciting prayers in school turns children into good citizens.

Open space is wasted space unless you're doing something with it.

The way to strengthen your own security is to add to the insecurity of your opponent.

Life begins before you are born and doesn't end when you die; the Russians don't believe this, which is why they lie and cheat.

A nuclear war is winnable.

Since there'll always be plenty of oil, research on solar energy and other such schemes is a waste of money and unfair to the oil companies.

Defense spending does not contribute to inflation, whatever the economists say.

Capital punishment makes murderers pause and think twice before killing their victims.

U.S. intervention in Vietnam was a noble cause; Soviet intervention in Afghanistan is naked aggression.

Nobody on welfare *wants* to work.

Books that are critical of American society do not belong in school libraries.

Don't knock Calvin Coolidge; we had prosperity when he was President. Don't knock Herbert Hoover either; he was a Republican.

Friendly terrorists are called freedom fighters.

Only the unborn have a right to life.

The Equal Rights Amendment means the end of chivalry.

People who get married live happily ever after.

An apple a day keeps the doctor away.

Your check is in the mail.

WILLIAM ATTWOOD

William Attwood is former publisher of Newsday *and served as ambassador under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson.*

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Decision on OSHA

In 1972, a government agency called cotton dust one of the country's five worst occupational health hazards. For the next nine years, dozens of lawyers, lobbyists, administrators and researchers argued about how much cotton dust should be in the air that about 200,000 cotton textile workers breathe. Too much in the past had resulted in their contracting byssinosis, or brown lung; the disease has disabled 35,000 of them. Now the Supreme Court has finally issued a decision that the A.F.L.-C.I.O. has hailed as a "historic" victory for the labor movement. The case had been recognized as a major legal test of whether the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) must use the "cost-benefit" approach in developing regulations. It acquired an even greater significance this past March when the Reagan Administration withdrew OSHA's opposition to cost-benefit analysis and asked the Supreme Court not to decide the case. The Administration planned to apply the cost-benefit criterion to all major regulations and didn't want the Court to invalidate it.

But the Supreme Court turned down the Administration's request and rejected industry's argument for cost-benefit analysis, ruling that OSHA need only consider the "feasibility" of its health standards. The decision is expected to have far-reaching implications for any regulation that involves "toxic materials or harmful physical agents."

Although the Court's decision was relatively simple and clear, the industry's legal minds quickly found a possible loophole. Seizing upon one phrase in the lengthy decision, Robert Coleman of the industry's trade association claimed: "All that the Court did say was that the law does not require OSHA to use that [cost-benefit] analysis." His implication was that OSHA could use cost-benefit analysis if it wanted to. Eric Frumin of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (A.C.T.W.U.) called this a "gross misinterpretation."

Although an industry lawyer said ominously, "You can be sure this is not the last case to be litigated under the OSHA Act," the immediate strategy, according to another industry spokesman, is to "work with OSHA to see what could be done through consultation rather than legal action." Thorne Auchter, the new head of OSHA, suggested what that may mean when he said that "cost-effectiveness studies" could still be used to determine "what particular *methods* should be used to achieve the required levels of protection." (Emphasis added.) At present, the industry has until 1984 to make the engineering changes necessary to meet the lower dust levels set by the regulation. In the meantime, workers may be required to wear masks, which they hate with a passion and which many think don't work. Auchter may try to change the standard so that industry would never have to make engineering changes and could rely instead on masks and screening programs, which would certainly be "cost effective," at least in the short run, for the industry. Or the Administration could go to Congress and get cost-benefit analysis mandated by law.

The other card that Reagan's OSHA still holds is control over enforcement of the standard, which was atrocious even under the old, very weak standard, as *The Charlotte Observer* documented in its Pulitzer Prize-winning series on brown lung. Already Reagan has asked for a big cut in the number of OSHA's inspectors. The Administration can also ease pressure on the states that do their own enforcement, including North and South Carolina, the two largest cotton textile states.

The irony of it all, says Frumin of A.C.T.W.U., is that the industry continues to fight even though a recent issue of its trade newspaper said that 65 to 90 percent of the mills are already in compliance with the standard. "The industry is in better shape than it's been in a long time," Frumin says. "They've been dragged kicking and screaming into the 1980s regarding modernization and capital investment plans, and they have us and OSHA to thank for that." But the fight continues. "The lesson of this entire matter for us is that whenever we win a battle, the struggle just shifts to another arena."

TIMOTHY SAASTA

Timothy Saasta is assistant director of the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy.

Why a Writers Congress?

Item: Last week John J. Geoghegan resigned after more than twenty years as head of the trade publishing firm Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, excoriating "the corporate business school mentality" promoted by the giant conglomerates that have taken over much of the publishing industry. "What's coming into publishing," he said, "are finance and administration guys telling editors what kind of product and what kind of marketing will be done."

Item: Last week *The New York Times* reported that many authors, under pressure from publishers, are accepting lower royalty rates than have traditionally prevailed. Also, more and more agents are raising the commission they take on writers' earnings from 10 percent to 15 percent.

Item: A study just released by the Authors Guild shows that the average American professional author working at least twenty hours a week earned $4,775 from writing, or approximately $4.90 an hour, in 1979.

Item: As Eve Pell noted in these pages ["Libel as a Political Weapon," June 6], the use of libel suits to silence political opponents is increasing rapidly.

Item: On page 12 of this issue, E.L. Doctorow describes the Reagan Administration's assault on the arts budgets of the National Endowment for the Arts.

These reports, all from the last few weeks, dramatize the increasingly parlous position of serious writers in the United

(*Continued on Page 20*)

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VARIATIONS.

CALVIN TRILLIN

I wasn't surprised to hear Callahan say that the Gouletas family had been invented by the Anti-Defamation League. Callahan, a loony elevator operator in a West Side apartment building I visit, figures that just about everything transpires according to a plan by the Jews. A few years ago, he tried to convince me that Sandy Koufax was an Irish kid hired by a cabal under the direction of Arthur J. Goldberg to pretend he was Jewish and thereby end talk of Jewish klutziness. ("Don't get me wrong: I admire them for it. That Goldberg's a smoothie.") Most of the tenants in Callahan's building are Jewish, but they put up with his crackpot theories because he's old and set in his ways and if he's upset he forwards their packages to Dayton, Ohio.

"You've outdone yourself, Callahan, you crazy old coot," I said. "If you're talking about the family of Governor Carey's new wife, they're Greek."

"Precisely," Callahan said, looking smug. "Very Greek. That's the point. For years, the A.D.L. has been looking for a way to correct the notion that Jewish businessmen are pushy nouveaux riches who made their money from shady real estate deals. Finally, they figured out how to lay it off on the Greeks. Watch. From now on, there'll be a steady stream of *arriviste* Greeks in the news—marrying governors, testifying before congressional committees about accusations that they've been forcing poor people out of buildings they want to convert to condominiums. Myself, I'm surprised the Greeks fell for it. The minute I heard of the Gouletas family I knew the Jews were behind it, but I figured they'd make them Puerto Rican."

"How does an elevator operator know words like *arriviste*, Callahan?"

"I read the magazines that the tenants get," he said. "During the day, there's nobody much here to take up and down. They're all out planning—using their clout downtown to have alternate-side-of-the-street parking regulations suspended on Tishah b'Ab, sending instructions to that Mrs. Bloomingdale they've got close to the Reagans to encourage Nancy Reagan to change her clothes eight times a day so American housewives will be inspired to buy more dresses from the garment industry. Close to the Reagans reminds me: What's the difference between a conservative and a neoconservative?"

"Could you just start the elevator, Callahan?"

"They believe exactly the same thing, but a neoconservative is Jewish and never learned to drive a car."

"Callahan, there are practically no Jews close to the Reagans. That crowd of Southern California used-car dealers that got him elected governor is strictly second-level country-club gentile. The crucifixion of Jesus Christ O.K., but Reagan can't be blamed on the Jews."

"That Reagan idea about the difference between authoritarian and totalitarian regimes came from an article in *Commentary*," Callahan said. "8-G has been taking *Commentary* for years. It runs stuff from that neoconservative crowd that used to be called The College of Irvings—Irving Kristol, Irving Podhoretz, Irving Bell—"

"The woman who wrote the article is named Kirkpatrick."

"—Irving Kirkpatrick. They need one goy to turn the lights on Friday night. In the dark, neoconservatives begin imagining they're going to be attacked by black teen-agers."

"Why should Jews want to make a distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian regimes?" I said, despite having just resolved not to allow Callahan to lure me into the conversation again. "Even if there's a difference, both kinds push around Jews. Unless you're one of those people who think Jews are really doing well in Argentina."

"Not as well as the neoconservatives are doing in Washington," Callahan said. "I'm amazed that you can't see why the Jews started this. But of course you're the one who wouldn't believe that Colonel Qaddafi is really a paid agent Israel put in power in Libya to make everyone think that Arabs are maniacs—Operation Mishuganah. With big countries, the distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian is easy, right? A totalitarian country is an authoritarian country that doesn't have an electric-shock machine. But with some of these Third World countries it's hard to figure out, because a lot of them don't even have dependable electricity. And the ones getting American aid have to prove that they're only authoritarian because otherwise we won't send any more American advisers to teach them how to torture people. So they have to get the advice of people who know Washington and know how to split hairs. And which people are taught hairsplitting from childhood in the interpretation of their religious writings?"

"The Jesuits?"

"The Jews, of course," Callahan said, following his usual policy of ignoring alternative theories. "Did you see Irving Kristol's article in *The Wall Street Journal* showing how easy it is for a trained hairsplitter to make a distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian? It's obvious that the whole crowd will be hiring out to get governments their authoritarian papers—the way people used to hire out to get actors off the blacklist. I'm surprised the *Journal* didn't make Kristol put 'Advertisement' above his article. I can see the notice on the bulletin board at the United Nations: Irvings Associates, Authoritarian Certification."

"I'm trapped in an elevator with a lunatic," I said.

"Jesus Christ!" Callahan said, becoming so excited that he finally started the elevator. "I just thought of a motto for Irvings Associates to use with some of those big torture countries: 'You pull out the hairs, we'll split them.' "

"This is the floor I want, Callahan. Just open the door."

"But I didn't get to tell you about the Israeli attack on the Iraqi nuclear reactor," Callahan said, making no move to open the door.

"Spare me that one, Callahan."

He gave me his most knowing look. "The Jews were behind it," he said.

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DOCUMENTS.

The Economics of Reaganomics

BERNARD D. NOSSITER

AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF THE REAGAN PROGRAM FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY. *Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office. 25 pp.*

Most of us had thought that Ronald Reagan's grab bag of economic measures was hauled up from the locker rooms at the better-heeled country clubs. It certainly looks like what the boys have been talking about for years—cut taxes, especially ours; give the corporations a break with faster write-offs for land, machines and plant; get the government off our backs by shredding safety nets for customers, workers and the environment; cut spending for the weak and lazy; show those Russians a thing or two with bigger bucks for bigger bangs.

But now, to demonstrate the error of our ways, come Senator Roger Jepsen, an Iowa Republican and chairman of the Joint Economic Committee's Subcommittee on Monetary and Fiscal Policy, and Timothy Roth, a senior economist on the committee. "The Reagan Program is internally consistent," they tell us in a staff study released in April. It will increase jobs, output, wages, savings and investment while reducing the rate of price increases and interest rates. What's more, it has a most distinguished paternity. It is nothing less than a replay of the successful program that John F. Kennedy promoted a generation ago. Roth even supplies the geometry, those two-dimensional parabolas and straight lines beloved by economists as expressions of what they hope are functional relationships between two variables—other things being equal (which, alas, they seldom are). There are no fewer than eleven of these symbols in the staff study, and although they lack the esthetic satisfaction of a colorless Miró, which they resemble, they do provide academic verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative.

All this is laid out in a twenty-five-page publication of the Joint Economic Committee, entitled *An Economic Analysis of the Reagan Program for Economic Recovery*. Roth takes responsibility for the text and diagrams. Senator Jepsen contributes an introduction that asserts, "The theories upon which the Reagan Program is based are not 'untested'; President Kennedy based his tax rate cuts upon precisely the same logic."

In fact, the paternity of what is now called "supply-side economics" is far older than Kennedy's Camelot. Those with some tutoring in economics will recall Jean Baptiste Say (1767-1832), whose "law" tyrannized the art for more than a century. Say's law simply stated that production (supply) equals consumption (demand). So the maker of pins should produce as much as he can without fear of finding a market. He pays for his raw materials, he pays for his simple machines, he pays his workers, he pays the bargeman to carry his goods to customers. All these recipients of income, in turn, buy pins and so life spins merrily on. Recession and depression, no matter their length, reflect artificial hindrances, usually created by government, to the smooth working of this happy cycle. Be fruitful and multiply.

In the depths of the Great Depression, Keynes, of course, finally repealed Say's law and demonstrated, even to the most credulous economists, that the slump was not an artificial occurrence but could be explained by something economists would understand: saving exceeds investment. With one magic formula, the intellectual debris was swept away and public policy makers were now legitimized to do what they were already doing, ignoring supply, focusing on demand, devising measures to increase incomes (more government spending, cutting taxes or both) and thereby enlarging the diminished markets for the pin makers and others.

And so Jepsen and Roth are both right and wrong about Kennedy. He proposed putting jobless men and plants to work with tax cuts and—although this was little advertised—big increases in military spending. There is a superficial resemblance to Reagan here. But Kennedy, in an environment more or less free of inflation, was attempting to stimulate demand in order to encourage a greater supply of goods and services. Reagan is working the other end of the street. He lives in a highly inflationary world. Somehow, he hopes to stimulate supply without a demand that would push up prices.

How does he square this circle? The not-so-Godlike figure in the machine is the Federal Reserve. It will hold back demand and prices by trimming the growth in the money supply. Apart from the fact that there is no agreement over what the money supply is, this policy is capricious to the point of fantasy. Long before Milton Friedman vulgarized the link between money and prices, the relationship was elegantly explored by Irving Fisher of Yale University. His famous formula held that the level of prices depended on both the amount of money and its velocity, the rate at which it passed from hand to hand. So if the Federal Reserve somehow cuts the volume of money by 10 percent, but that smaller volume is transmitted from customer to seller to wage earner and so on at a 10 percent faster rate, the Fed has moved in a circle.

The beauty of all this is that nobody knows how to affect or even measure the velocity of money until after it has all happened. The Fed, on which Messrs. Reagan, Jepsen, Roth and countless others are relying, is flying blind. It is as if the central bank were driving a car with one set of dimly visible brake and accelerator pedals and one invisible pair. The driver knows only that when he steps down or lets up on

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one of his barely visible pedals (the money supply), he may or may not be affecting the unseen pair (velocity). But until the car lurches forward, halts, or hits a tree, he does not know what he is doing. This is fine at a fun fair but a trifle reckless for sound men from the country clubs.

Apart from this little difficulty, there is a major assumption underlying Roth's geometry and it is almost certainly wrong. The assumption is that we live in a world of textbook, competitive markets. In this world, the power of an I.B.M. to set prices for its products is no greater than that of your neighborhood typewriter repairman; the power of Alcoa to affect the price and supply of aluminum ingots is indistinguishable from the power of the local Korean grocer to set the price of lettuce. Only economists and the White Queen ("Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast") are capable of so suspending reality. Lesser mortals suspect that large corporations and large trade unions do indeed directly affect prices, output and wages.

If lesser mortals are correct, some of Reagan's tax cuts will be translated into even higher prices and some will, perhaps, increase output. The tax cuts for corporations embodied in the fast write-offs for investment, will, like Kennedy's investment tax credit, help the stockholders, but in themselves are not likely to increase plant and equipment. Business enlarges investment in the expectation of bigger sales; you don't replace an old machine with a new one simply because the new model's cost has been reduced by a tax gimmick. Reagan's country-club budget managers have made it impossible to determine whether, on the whole, his spending cuts outweigh or fall short of the stimulus to demand provided by his increased arms outlays and his tax reductions. Peace to Messrs. Jepsen and Roth, but the program is not a coherent package. It is a grab bag reflecting the gut instincts of businessmen in padded locker rooms.

This is not entirely discouraging. In time, the Reagan Administration may well discover that inflation won't respond to the fun-fair Fed—that prices rather than output and employment are better stimulated by the other measures. It is conceivable that sound men will then turn their attention to those with pricing power, to the large corporations and the unions. The Reagan Administration may yet stumble into something like the incomes policies that enable a few Western European states to hold down inflation and increase demand. Once again, Jean Baptiste Say will become a historical curiosity and the complexities implied in Irving Fisher will replace the cult of Friedman. □

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Figgie II: Crime Fear in the Suites

JULIE LEWIN

THE FIGGIE REPORT ON FEAR OF CRIME PART I: The General Public. *164 pp.*

THE FIGGIE REPORT PART II. The Corporate Response to Fear of Crime. *89 pp. A-T-O Inc. Research and Forecasts Inc., 110 East 59th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022.*

The Figgie Report Part II: The Corporate Response to Fear of Crime is a private study commissioned by A-T-O Inc., which manufactures, among other things, civilian and military security and surveillance equipment. *Figgie II* follows *The Figgie Report on Fear of Crime Part I: The General Public.* Both are named for Harry E. Figgie Jr., A-T-O chief executive officer and board chairman, who, the preface (written by former Congressman John Marsh Jr., an A-T-O director and recently appointed Secretary of the Army) tells us, is "a man of vision, humanity, and a deep sense of history . . . who has a great personal commitment to preserve the values which he believes have made this country great."

According to the report, 76 percent of a group of senior executives with *Fortune* 1,000 corporations favor wiretapping, compared with 21 percent of the general public; 88 percent want to give the police more power to question people, compared with 63 percent of the public; 92 percent favor the death penalty for murderers, compared with 66 percent of the public; 79 percent feel prison sentences discourage crime, compared with 48 percent of the public; 96 percent favor mandatory sentences for people convicted of violent crimes, compared with 89 percent of the public; 97 percent favor long prison sentences for people convicted of violent crimes, compared with 86 percent of the public; 46 percent favor sterilization of habitual criminals and the "hopelessly insane," compared with 45 percent of the public, and 55 percent think that the main cause of crime is "the breakdown of traditional values and family structure," while 38 percent blame it on "leniency of the courts" and 30 percent on economic factors such as unemployment and

Julie Lewin has worked in prison systems and specializes in articles on criminal justice.

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poverty (some executives gave more than one reason).

Further, 39 percent of the executives fear that "they, a family member, or a business associate will be kidnapped" and take appropriately elaborate precautions; more than half the executives of the 43 percent of *Fortune* 1,000 companies that do business abroad "exhibit kidnapping concerns," and "kidnap coverage is now one of the fastest growing segments of the insurance business."

The media lapped up the two Figgie reports. Research and Forecasts Inc., the research arm of Ruder & Finn, the public relations concern and the firm responsible for this scholarship, boasts that it was the subject of seventy-four editorials and 100 front-page stories, reaching 100 million potential newspaper and magazine readers. *The New York Times* alone has devoted two editorials, a front-page business section piece and several news articles to the reports, all the while managing to avoid meaningful scrutiny of the statistics, the methodologies and the basic assumptions. Months after the reports' release, Tom Brokaw, co-host of NBC's *Today* show, referred to Part I in a discussion on crime, and the next day, Federal Bureau of Investigation Director William Webster mentioned it on the Public Broadcasting System's *MacNeil/Lehrer Report.*

The crucial issue here is not that the underlying assumptions of the two reports—that both the rate and fear of violent crime have increased dramatically during this century—are disputed by many criminal-justice researchers who view the reports' historical perspective as skewed. (It should be said that for crime rates, the reports rely solely on F.B.I. crime statistics, which show great increases in violent crime, while ignoring the crime-victim surveys conducted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census for the U.S. Department of Justice, which are based on personal interviews and, because they include unreported crime, are considered by many authorities to be more accurate than the F.B.I. data. The most recent survey concluded that from 1973 to 1979 crime has remained relatively stable. As for the public's fear of violent crime, a growing research literature shows that it rises and falls in cycles but remains relatively stable overall.) Nor is it that these dubious crime figures and this propaganda form the basic ammunition for Senator Robert Dole's request for $6.5 billion for prison construction—along with defense, probably the Reagan Administration's only intended public sector growth industry.

Rather, what is most significant about the Figgie studies is that in purporting to delineate only the dimensions of the fear "without attempting to offer solutions," they implicitly further the single "solution" the Administration favors: political repression to enforce regressive economic policies.

The fact that during the Great Depression incarceration and execution rates rose exponentially compared to the crime rate or population growth "must cast doubt on the conventional view," to quote from an article by Jeffrey Reiman and Sue Headlee, which appeared in *Crime & Delinquency*, January 1981, that "the fundamentalist revival in criminal justice policies" is "merely a response to the public's 'conservative mood.' " The lesson: in hard times there is increased social pressure to blame the individual rather than the system, and punishment becomes a means of preserving the social and economic hierarchy. □

ARTICLES.

FAILURE OF THE IRANIAN LEFT

The Toppling Of Bani-Sadr

SHARIF ARANI

The immediate events leading up to the fall of Abolhassan Bani-Sadr began with the broadcast on May 27 of a speech by Ayatollah Khomeini. The Imam made ominous pronouncements on the future of the first President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, suggesting that he would be deposed as was the Republic's first Prime Minister, Mehdi Bazargan. The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution lashed out against the beleaguered President, telling him and his supporters to "go back to Europe, to the United States or wherever else you want." On June 8, following the banning of Bani-Sadr's *Islamic Revolution*, Bazargan's *Mizan* and other newspapers, Khomeini bluntly threatened Bani-Sadr with dismissal. Two days later, while touring the battlefront, the President was informed that he had been relieved of his duties as Commander in Chief of the armed forces.

Upon Bani-Sadr's return to the capital, the club-wielding ruffians of the Party of God (*hezbollahi*) besieged the Presidential palace, demanding the execution of "the Second Shah." Bani-Sadr issued a statement emphasizing that he had been marked for liquidation, and eventually went into hiding. His statement was disseminated abroad by Reuters, but not in Iran, where it reached the public a few days later through Hojatolislam Hashemi Rafsanjani, the Speaker of the clerically dominated Parliament and one of Bani-Sadr's chief opponents.

These events had been foreshadowed in the demands of the leaders of the Islamic Republican Party (I.R.P.) in early March, when clashes between their supporters and those of President Bani-Sadr broke out. While initiating criminal investigations into his conduct, the clerical leaders demanded that Bani-Sadr be dismissed and put on trial for treason, thus presaging the scenario for what might be called the "Bazarganization" of Bani-Sadr.

The Iraqi invasion of Iran on September 22, 1980, halted a process of "Islamicization" in which "liberals" and "na-

Sharif Arani is a pen name. The author is an Iranian and teaches in the United States.

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tionalists" were purged by the thousands from the civil service and the educational system. The purges were conceived and carried out by Khomeini and the I.R.P. under the leadership of Ayatollah Mohammed Beheshti. The clerical party uses the labels *maktabi* (doctrinaire) for the approved group, and "liberals" and "nationalists" for the new "counterrevolutionary" elements marked for expulsion. It then embarked on the liquidation of the "West-intoxicated" elements and the redistribution of their positions to the Islamic loyalists. A group of laymen from the petty bourgeoisie, distinguishable by their badge of Islamic piety and by their servility to the clergy, had taken over the educational system and were fast capturing the key positions of the state.

But the war gave President Bani-Sadr and the beleaguered moderates clustered under his umbrella a serious chance to reverse the purges. The moderates' prospects for curbing the "monopolism" of the I.R.P. and for regaining control of the state seemed very good as late as December 1980. But Bani-Sadr and the moderates around him failed to act decisively. Clerical hegemony was re-established after what in retrospect appears only as a breathing spell of three or four months for the moderates.

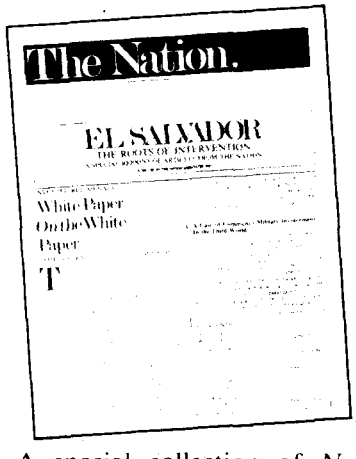
As a consequence of the war, the army immediately became highly popular, and Bani-Sadr, as its Commander in Chief, became a national hero. The ruling clerics were blamed for the disintegration of a once powerful army, and found themselves on the defensive. Their rhetorical clamor subsided, and the voice of the moderates—mainly Bazargan and his associates, who had opposed the dismantling of the army during their tenure of office—was widely and appreciatively heard. One group in particular welcomed the reappearance of the moderates on the political stage with enthusiasm: the disaffected bazaar merchants. The bazaar—the traditional sector of the urban economy—had constituted one of the main pillars of the Islamic Republic, and when the merchants sided with the President, the position of the I.R.P. leaders was seriously weakened. In a defensive speech on November 16, 1980, Khomeini castigated the bazaar merchants for their defection, placing them in the same category as the maligned liberals and the minority faction of the Marxist Fedayeen Khalq.

But Bani-Sadr was unable to capitalize on the popularity of the army and the discontent of the bazaar merchants. He failed to organize any concerted action by the sundry groups who supported him while the political climate was highly favorable, and contented himself with long and pathetic harangues which even the state radio stopped broadcasting. The bazaar merchants continued to demonstrate their support well into March of this year, but then demoralization apparently set in as they tired of waiting for a clear call from the President. And so the merchants resigned themselves and made a tacit accommodation with the ruling clergy and their lay servants.

The alert reaction of Khomeini and the I.R.P. sharply contrasted with the ineffectuality of the President and the moderates. From the very beginning, Khomeini was careful to keep Bani-Sadr's exposure in the mass media to the minimum. He also set up a clerically dominated Supreme Defense Council to limit the President's power. By December, the ruling clergy had fully regained their composure and set out to secure their share of glory from the war effort. Clerical control of the Supreme Defense Council began to make itself felt through the appointment of permanent representatives, usually clerics, to supervise various fronts. More important, the role of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution—a militia controlled by the clerics—in the fighting was progressively enhanced, with its commander assuming the position of a full member of the Supreme Defense Council. On the last day of December 1980, the I.R.P. pushed through a law envisioning a vast expansion of the Guardians' numbers and enabling its leadership to choose additional recruits from army conscripts. This January, the ruling clergy stepped up their denunciations of Bani-Sadr's conduct of the war, and pushed him into undertaking a "major offensive" prematurely. The offensive, predictably, flopped.

Meanwhile, Khomeini was wooing the bazaar merchants to induce them to give up their support of Bani-Sadr and Bazargan and to come to an arrangement with Prime Minister Mohammed Ali Rajai and his Cabinet, who served the clerics. On January 15, the Imam received a delegation of bazaar merchants and made a conciliatory speech rebuking, with astute hypocrisy, Bani-Sadr's clerical critics.

Events of the past three years in Iran have offered some baffling challenges to conventional wisdom. Now, with some two million people made refugees by the Iraqi war, with roughly a quarter of the labor force unemployed and the catastrophic state of the economy as recently depicted by



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both the President and the Prime Minister and with all the universities closed down and well over 100,000 students idled, the clerical regime was prospering and consolidating its hold over the reins of power.

How explain this apparent paradox? First and foremost, there is the charisma of the Imam and the answering adulation for him among the bulk of the population, a phenomenon which can be characterized as populist legitimism, to use a term put forward by the historian Eric Hobsbawm in his 1959 book *Primitive Rebels*. In the face of most compelling objective evidence to the contrary, the disaffected population has time and again dissociated Khomeini from the evils of the regime, displacing the blame onto a variety of other real and imaginary agents. Khomeini has an impeccable, instinctive understanding of this populist legitimism and exploits it in a masterly fashion, making him supremely qualified to rule this semiliterate nation.

Then there is the cohesive esprit de corps of the Shiite clergy, which has worked as a stabilizing factor. A number of Grand Ayatollahs have publicly criticized certain policies of the I.R.P. leaders, thereby stealing the limelight from potentially more troublesome dissidents. (The value of the clerical esprit de corps as a political asset has long been demonstrated by the ability of two notable clerics, the late Ayatollah Taleghani, and Ahmad Khomeini, the Imam's son, to contain the opposition of the Islamic radicals, the People's Mujahedeen, whose cause they explicitly or tacitly upheld.) Add, too, the cohesiveness and solidarity of the petty bourgeoisie, which supplies the regime with the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution, the new civil servants and the new schoolteachers. The solidarity of this class is a considerable asset since there is no other social stratum with comparable unity. Finally, we should not lose sight of the fact that the resumption of oil exports has infused new life into the bazaar economy, which handles the country's imports and supports a vast network of appended distributive trades and groups of vagrant peddlers.

As is usually the case, the disunity, diffuseness and disorientation of the opposition have played as important a role in the consolidation of the new order as has the strength of Khomeini and his allies. The small size of demonstrations in April, compared with the previous month, indicated that the fervor of the opposition was dissipating. Things were settling down in favor of the clerical party, which had survived the hostage deal unscathed and was appropriating the lion's share of the credit for the war effort. In mid-April, a demonstration of the Marxist Fedayeen attracted only about 1,000 people, and the mullahs dispatched only thirty *hezbollahi* ruffians to harass them. About the same time, Prime Minister Rajai assumed control of the foreign ministry, which had been the one remaining bone of contention between him and Bani-Sadr. The Islamic Party proceeded to close Bazargan's newspaper and arrest its editor.

There was, however, one large demonstration that month. It was organized by the regime's only remaining significant opponents, the People's Mujahedeen, who were now declaring their support for President Bani-Sadr. On April 27, 100,000 people, many of whom were women, took part in the Mujahedeen's demonstration. The demonstrators said that a radical change in their hitherto peaceful policy toward the clerical regime was likely. Two of their number were shot and killed. In subsequent clashes over the next few days, the number of those reported killed was raised to seven. The government spokesman, Behzad Nabavi, hinted at a severe crackdown.

The Mujahedeen advocates a Marxian socialist reinterpretation of Islam, and has become increasingly anticlerical. Despite the fact that many of its members have been killed and severely injured and some 1,100 of them are currently in jail, it has, until recently, been a loyal opposition, very much like the moderates. Its criticism in its newspaper *Mujahid* of the knife-drawing hoodlums of the Party of God, like that expressed in Bani-Sadr's *Islamic Revolution* and Bazargan's *Mizan*, has been mild, as has been its reaction to persistent persecution. More important, it has been hampered by serious errors caused by its ideology. For far too long it was trapped in its revolutionary rhetoric of noncompromise, and failed to forge an effective alliance with other elements of the loyal opposition; it also delayed throwing its full support behind Bani-Sadr when he and the army were at the height of their popularity.

As the events of the past weeks have demonstrated, the rallying of the Mujahedeen behind Bani-Sadr came too late. Bani-Sadr had failed to act when his prestige was high and the army and the bazaar were solidly behind him, and would not act in May, under much less favorable conditions, following the Mujahedeen's public expression of support. In retrospect, one is tempted to ask why the I.R.P.'s plans for ousting Bani-Sadr were not implemented even sooner. Two plausible reasons suggest themselves. First, retaining and containing a leader of the opposition in the office of the Presidency worked to the advantage of the clerics by serving to diffuse and neutralize opposition to the regime. Second, Iraq's President Saddam Hussein was making attractive peace propositions, and the mullahs might have thought it expedient to keep Bani-Sadr around long enough to sign a

DRAWINGS BY LOU MYERS

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humiliating peace treaty. Dismissal for an ignominious agreement with Iraq—to the mullahs this must have appeared the ideal fate for the first President of the Islamic Republic. The peace mission of the Islamic countries foundered in May, however, and the clerical party decided to proceed with the well-rehearsed scenario for the Bazarganization of Bani-Sadr and the expulsion of his team. At the same time, the regime made good its threats against the Mujahedeen by summary execution of scores of demonstrators after the disturbances following the Impeachment of Bani-Sadr on June 21.

The I.R.P. has called the removal of Bani-Sadr its "third revolution." The phrase is intended to celebrate the final stage of the victory of mob-supported mullah-cracy over the forces of moderation, and marks the beginning of a new phase in the development of clerical fascism in Iran. □

THE N.E.A. BUDGET

Art Funding for The Artist's Sake

Although it appeared that the National Endowment for the Arts would be one of the most grievously wounded of the many casualties in the Battle of the Budget, various House and Senate committees have made some restorations in the 50 percent cut originally proposed by the Administration. But programs aiding artists remain severely curtailed. Grant programs for individual artists and writers will be subjected to cuts of $2.5 million and $1.6 million respectively. The artists-in-schools program will be decimated. As we point out in the editorial on page 5, the financial plight of the writer in America is worrisome, and cuts in Federal aid can only worsen the situation. Thus, the following plea, delivered last March by the novelist E.L. Doctorow to the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee has taken on a renewed urgency.
—The Editors

E. L. DOCTOROW

I have always disliked the phrase "the arts." It connotes to me furs and black ties and cocktail receptions, the patronage by the wealthy of work that is tangential to their lives, or that fills them not with dread or awe or visionary joy but with self-satisfaction.

"The arts" have nothing to do with the loneliness of writers or painters working in their rooms year after year, or with actors putting together plays in lofts, or with dancers tearing up their bodies to make spatial descriptions of the hope of beauty or transcendent truth.

So as a working writer I distinguish myself from the arts community. I am confirmed in this when I look at the National Endowment for the Arts board and program structure. In the past a very small percentage of the arts budget has been given over to literature, to the grants made to young writers or dramatists or poets of promise. In all the time since its founding the N.E.A. has found only four writers worthy to sit on its immense board. Instead, the heavy emphasis has been on museums, opera companies, symphony orchestras: just those entities that happen to cater to patrons of "the arts."

I suppose I would have to confess, if asked, that I feel about opera, for instance, that it is not a living art in this country, that we do not naturally write and produce operas from ourselves as a matter of course as, for example, Italy did in the nineteenth century, and that, therefore, as wonderful and exciting as opera production may be, it is essentially the work of conservation of European culture; opera companies are conservators of the past, like museums, and their support by the National Endowment reflects the strong bias or belief in the arts as something from the past rather than the present.

The National Endowment programs I value most are just those likely to be proscribed: first, the programs of individual grants to individual artists in whatever medium—the programs endowing directly the work of living artists; and, second, those programs that do not separate the arts from life, from our own life and times but emphasize the connection—the artists-in-education program, the poets who go into schools, for example, and help children to light the spark in themselves. I cannot imagine anything more responsible than the work of persuading a schoolchild to express his or her anguished or joyful observations—and to be self-rewarded with a poem or a painting. Whole lives ride on moments like that.

Or the *inter-arts* programs, the *folk arts*, the *expansion arts*—all bureaucratic terms for encouraging experiment and risk-taking on the part of artists, and for bringing artists in contact with people everywhere in the country, connecting people with the impulses in themselves. Programs that encourage participation rather than the passive receipt of official art of the past are the ones I think most important: all the programs which suggest to people that they have their own voices, that they can sing and write of their own past—people in their churches, students in their classes, or prisoners in their cells. These programs—just the ones branded so vilely in the Heritage Foundation Report as instruments of social policy or public therapy, and slated for extinction by our new budgeteers—are the ones I value. And not from any vague idealistic sentiment either: I know as an artist where art comes from. I know there is a ground-song from which every writer lifts his voice, that literature comes out of a common chorus and that our recognition of the genius of a writer—Mark Twain, for example—cannot exclude the people he speaks for.

Art will arise where it is least expected and usually not wanted. You can't generate it with gala entertainments and $200-a-plate dinners. You can, if you're an enlightened legislative body, see to it that you don't ipso facto create an official state art by concentrating your funding on arts estab-

E.L. Doctorow's most recent novel is Loon Lake *(Random House).*

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lishments. Other people may talk of how many billions of dollars of business is produced from the arts, but to me that is beside the point. I tell you that an enlightened national endowment first of all puts its money on largely unknown obsessive individuals who have sacrificed all the ordinary comforts and consolations of life in order to do their work. And it sees to it, second of all, that these individuals are brought into contact with their communities. That's *my* idea of a national endowment: A National Endowment for Artists.

A museum, an opera company, or a symphony orchestra, after all, has access to private funding—some of the arts are the natural taste of the privileged among us. But a community that puts on its own play by its own unknown playwright, or brings in a poet to teach a writing class at a public library, has no source of funding other than the tax revenues to which it has contributed.

But saying even this, I cannot avoid the feeling that it is senseless for me to testify here today. People everywhere have been put in the position of fighting piecemeal for this or that social program while the assault against all of them proceeds across a broad front. The truth is, if you're going to take away the lunches of schoolchildren, the pensions of miners who've contracted black lung, the storefront legal services of the poor who are otherwise stunned into insensibility by the magnitude of their troubles, you might as well get rid of poets, artists and musicians. If you're planning to scrap medical care for the indigent, scholarships for students, day-care centers for the children of working mothers, transportation for the elderly and handicapped—if you're going to eliminate people's public service training jobs and then reduce their unemployment benefits after you've put them on the unemployment rolls, taking away their food stamps in the bargain, then I say the loss of a few poems or arias cannot matter. If you're going to close down the mental therapy centers for the veterans of Vietnam, what does it matter if our theaters go dark or our libraries close their doors?

The character of this new Administration reminds me of nothing so much as some evil landlord from a melodrama, one of those old-time landlords with a black silk hat and a waxed mustache rubbing his hands and chortling with glee as he slips into Washington. I am waiting for a rising sound of protest from the halls of Congress, but I have not yet heard declared what we all know to be true—that the so-called economic policy issuing from this government, for all its supply-side jargon and budgetary pieties, is a simple, undeniable eviction procedure, a brutal eviction of not only widows and children but all citizens except the already privileged, all interests except those of wealth and business. As a writer of fiction I could not get away with a portrayal of such unmitigated and sanctimonious cruelty; no landlord this infamous would be believed in a fiction of mine. Yet here he is, in one of his guises, pointing to charts and budget ledgers telling us who lives and who dies, and here he is in another, testifying about all the bombs and missiles we'll be able to make from the money we take away from the poor.

And so in my testimony for this small social program I am aware of the larger picture and, really, it stuns me. What I see in this picture is a kind of sovietizing of American life, guns before butter, the plating of this nation with armaments, the sacrifice of everything in our search for ultimate security. We shall become an immense armory. But inside this armory there will be nothing, not a people but an emptiness; we shall be an armory around nothingness, and our true strength and security and the envy of the world—the passion and independent striving of a busy working and dreaming population committed to fair play and the struggle for some sort of real justice and community—will be no more. If this happens, maybe in the vast repository of bombs, deep in the subterranean chambers of our missile fields, someone in that cavernous silence will remember a poem and recite it. Maybe some young soldier will hum a tune, maybe another will be able to speak the language well enough to tell a story, maybe two people will get up and dance to the rhythm of the doomsday clock ticking us all to extinction.

Thank you. □

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LETTER FROM POLAND

The Longest Denouement

GUSTAW MOSZCZ

Bydgoszcz, Poland

Poland today is, in any analysis, a country facing probable turmoil that will completely overshadow what has so far occurred. Poland is that unique phenomenon, a nominally socialist state, undergoing a genuinely socialist transformation in its political apparatus, with majority support on a massive scale. It is also bankrupt.

The economic collapse is like a magician's illusion. Everyone watching the trick *knows* that their eyes are being deceived, but still the rabbits are pulled out of the hat, the rope doesn't fall down, the body remains suspended in midair. For all intents and purposes the Polish economy has collapsed, but it continues functioning on shared illusions. The noncasual observer of current Polish social life can spot the realities of economic decline. The black market exchange rate has zoomed from 100 zlotys to the U.S. dollar to 150-plus. This demand for hard currency reflects the hurtling decline of purchasing power of the zloty. The government recently imposed rice rationing—1.1 pounds per person every three months—on top of meat, sugar and butter rationing. It's a matter of time before bread and milk join the list. Chocolate is rationed and available only to people with children. There are four countries in the world that now have food rationing: China, Kampuchea, Cuba and Poland.

The grocery stores here are desolate places now. Only tea and vinegar are on the shelves. The cannisters of tea are arranged in intricate patterns to enliven the display, but somehow the effort only reinforces the pathos of the situation. Whenever a form of (as yet) nonrationed protein, such as pickled fish or cheese, arrives at a shop, long queues immediately form. Luckily, eggs are still freely available. In the first week of May the finance ministry issued a warning that there will be a greater scarcity of consumer supplies, which was courageously frank and realistic, in contrast to past illusory prognostications, but infinitely depressing for the average consumer.

The resourcefulness of a materially depressed society comes to the fore in such conditions; people improvise an existence through a combination of black marketeering and under-the-counter bartering. Poles say that these are the hardest times they have known, including during World War II, in terms of not only food shortages but the scarcity of all kinds of consumer goods. One elderly woman told me that the only difference between wartime and the present was that at least the black market during the war was "good," meaning reliable and relatively honest. Now, when one buys sugar on the black market, it has probably been adulterated with salt. On a recent trip to Auschwitz my taxi-driver guide spent his time in the museum cafeteria arranging to purchase some under-the-counter butter and cheese. He said that a kilo of good-quality butter was now fetching ten times its regular price.

The material hardships faced by the average Pole are scarcely alleviated by the recent rescheduling of Poland's debt payments to Western banks. The payments due this year have been postponed until 1986, but they amount to somewhat less than 10 percent of the total debt, and there is no immediate indication of Poland's being able to lift its economy from the floor. Senior government officials are now talking openly of 10 percent unemployment in the near future while industry undergoes restructuring, and there are moves to renegotiate the August 1980 agreements concerning earlier retirement ages, index-linked wage increases and price stabilization because there isn't enough money to meet such demands. But only recently have the economic planning errors made during the 1970s been publicly aired.

The open acknowledgment of past mistakes poses a serious and unprecedentedly frank indictment of the previous and, in some cases, the present party hierarchy. The recent "self-criticism" of former Prime Minister Edward Babiuch at a meeting with workers in Warsaw, during which he accepted responsibility for past economic and political errors, is seen less as a step toward open government than an attempt by him to secure leniency when his case is reviewed by the Investigative Commission currently studying the histories of senior party functionaries.

The public washing of dirty linen spills over to many areas of life. The recent exposé of a prostitution ring that shipped Polish women to Mafia connections in Italy aroused much comment. The women were recruited by the state-run entertainment industry as dancers and singers, and the Polish senior officials involved received kickbacks of $3 a day per woman. At least 300 women are known to have been recruited, and the actual figure is probably much higher. Many Poles were angered by the revelation that the massive pensions a top-level party official receives (up to five times his average salary) is paid upon his death to his children or grandchildren. It is this kind of family-party oligarchy that the Polish Communist Party is trying to dismantle. Solidarity members must feel a certain amusement as the party rank and file becomes more radical in its reforming zeal with each passing day. Certainly Solidarity is currently taking a back seat, organizing its own elections to union positions at local, regional and national levels. The union is trying to push through these elections before the immediate buildup to the party congress in July.

The events here on March 19, when Solidarity members were beaten by security police, have not as yet been satisfactorily resolved and the discussions are likely to drift on inconclusively for some time. When the Prosecutor's office in Bydgoszcz recently phoned the head of the security police in the area, asking him when he would be available to discuss the police attack on the unionists, he hung up on them after

Gustaw Moszcz is the pseudonym of a reporter living in Poland.

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saying he would "never" be available. Within a few hours the lawyers investigating the case received a telephone call from the Central Prosecutor's office in Warsaw instructing them to deal only with people who had actually been present during the Bydgoszcz incident.

Most of the people here remain cynical about the government's promises of reforms. They see them as mere words, which will leave the status quo shaken but not demolished. Solidarity has been promised media time, but nothing definite as yet. The pre-congress documents call for opening the civil service to nonparty members up to the highest ranks, a separation of party and state offices, secret ballots for party posts and various other changes. A common response to such declarations is yes, they are fine—so long as they are actually put into practice, and in a way that does not benefit only "favored" figures and policies. The deepest-dyed skeptics argue that such measures are beside the point since by definition any real change can only occur with the prior approval of the Soviet Union and so cannot mean much. It is felt that the political alternatives facing the country haven't altered much since last summer; true democratization will arrive only when the Russians decide that the point of no return has been reached. The most realistic prospect seems to be yet another version of sham party reform, like that of 1970. A less cynical view argues that the weight of Solidarity permits more radical change, even if it is limited to economic management and improving conditions for the working class.

The Polish Communist Party is currently doing a balancing act, and it will have to move off the tightrope very soon. The political prisoners of K.P.N. (Confederation for an Independent Poland), including their leader, Lech Moczulski, are still in jail, and Solidarity is still calling for their release. The fact that there have been no moves toward bringing them to trial indicates that the authorities are trying to soft-pedal the issue. Meanwhile, other nationalist groups have achieved a tacit approval from the authorities. The legal registration of the Grunwald Patriotic Union occurred at the end of April. This is a somewhat mysterious organization that claims membership of more than 100,000. It has received the blessing of the prominent party hard-liner Stefan Olszowski, and has as its motto "For Your Freedom and Ours." This innocuous slogan disguises a multitude of possibilities that could disturb the Soviet Union and liberal circles in Poland equally. The organization staged a thinly veiled anti-Semitic demonstration in Warsaw in March, which was called purportedly to criticize the Jewish-Stalinist Old Guard of the postwar Polish Communist Party. While the Soviet Union will not be pleased about the re-emergence of Polish nationalist sentiment, many Jewish families who remember the exodus of 1968 will be disturbed by the union's recent pamphlets attacking the "Zionist" beliefs of many Solidarity intellectuals, attacks the union justifies with vague allusions to family connections with Stalinist members of the postwar Polish Communist Party. It is still impossible to assess the aims and implications of such an organization. While there is likely to be little sympathy for, or interest in, an overtly anti-Semitic movement, the Grunwald Patriotic Union may well come to act as a front for various hard-line tendencies within the upper echelons of the party, sweetening the calls for austerity measures and party absolutism with sentimental appeals to Poland's older and greater past, national pride and duty to the future.

The May Day celebrations in Poland were subdued, to say the least, with the parade in Warsaw taking a very unusual route around the city, along the narrowest streets, thus giving an illusion of crowds in order to disguise the poor turnout. The big celebration came two days later, in commemoration of the 190th anniversary of Poland's first democratic Constitution. This occasion, previously ignored and condemned in official circles as "reactionary," had its own appropriately double-edged significance. The 1791 Constitution lasted but a brief time before autocratic elements in the Polish state called upon Czarina Catherine the Great to send in troops to overthrow the liberal regime and restore order. All the Russians are sending at present are watches, TV sets, furniture, refrigerators, canned fish, honey and fruit juice, but undoubtedly they watched with hard eyes the thousands of people who peacefully turned out on the streets on May 3. □

SLENDER THREADS

Tenant Power to Political Power

MAURICE ZEITLIN

Santa Monica, California

On April 14, Santa Monica elected a new government dedicated to the proposition that "a city is not just for the profit of the few." Santa Monica is not "for sale to speculators, developers, bankers or the Chamber of Commerce," the new mayor said during the campaign. Conservatives warned voters to "stop the radicals from taking total control of Santa Monica" and destroying it "to test their socialistic political philosophies." But a progressive political coalition called Santa Monicans for Renters' Rights (S.M.R.R.) won an absolute majority on the City Council, kept all the seats on the rent board, took the two it contested on the board of education and defeated a so-called anticrime initiative put forth by the right. S.M.R.R.'s own alternative, which won handily, focused on neighborhood programs, paramedical and other protective services and increased police on foot patrol.

Ruth Goldway, chairperson of S.M.R.R., was elected mayor; a mother of three and a native New Yorker, she is the only non-Californian on the council. Other S.M.R.R. members making up the council majority are Ken Edwards, head of the political action committee of the American

Maurice Zeitlin, professor of sociology at the University of California at Los Angeles, and a 1981 Guggenheim Fellow, lives in Santa Monica and is on the statewide steering committee of the Campaign for Economic Democracy.

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Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Union local; Dolores Press, a clerk with the Retail Clerks local, a widow and mother of four; Jim Conn, a Methodist minister, and Dennis Zane, a steelworker's son, tenant organizer, C.E.D. activist and high school math teacher.

The election confirmed, at least in Santa Monica, what many polls show: on specific issues many voters remain progressive despite the supposed right turn signaled by the 1980 elections. Santa Monica is not America—what town, including Peoria, is?—but it provides a good case study in local politics for the left nationwide. There is much talk about "getting back to the grass roots"; Santa Monica shows how it can be done.

The New Left majority in Santa Monica, a city of 90,000 near Los Angeles, and home of aerospace industry and the Rand Corporation, was born in the mid-1970s as a tenants' movement against escalating rents, condominium conversions and evictions. The local chapter of the Campaign for Economic Democracy (C.E.D.) took the lead in organizing tenant unions, picketing landlords and fighting evictions. By 1977, the movement had spilled into the electoral arena.

In 1978, C.E.D, the Democratic Club and the Fair Housing Alliance joined to form S.M.R.R. In a local initiative in the spring of 1979 it helped win passage of a rent control law, and in June won the election of a pro-tenant slate to the rent board. In this April's election, as in past contests, S.M.R.R. candidates won two-thirds or more of the votes in the precincts of the city with the heaviest concentration of tenants, compared with 40 percent among the middle-income homeowners living on the south side, and 25 percent in the affluent enclave of luxurious homes in the city's north. But from the single issue of rent control and its mainly tenant base, S.M.R.R. has broadened its program and expanded its constituency.

S.M.R.R. now offers concrete proposals to preserve the "human scale" of the city and enhance the quality of life for all its residents. These include eliminating toxic chemicals from the drinking water and requiring all firms to identify chemicals used locally; curbing high-rise construction; creating a model of solar and other renewable energy use; expanding the city's affordable housing supply, in part by requiring a fixed percentage of low- and moderate-income units in new residential construction, and above all, involving Santa Monica's residents to the fullest in the decisions shaping the city's growth and quality of life.

S.M.R.R. has thus reached beyond its tenant base to appeal to the "consumption interests" of renters and homeowners alike. S.M.R.R. offers them programs that would make drinking water safer, clean up beaches, ease traffic congestion and preserve their view of the Pacific from the encroachment of high-rise office buildings. Bankers, executives and businessmen who live on the north side may ignore these benefits, but a growing number of other homeowners favor them. S.M.R.R.'s share of the votes in the four distinctively rental areas of the city, and in the affluent haven to the north, was about the same this time as it was when rent control passed two years ago. But among the south-side homeowners, it rose by one-fourth.

The S.M.R.R. platform emerged after months of intensive discussions, first among activists in its separate organizations, then in semi-public S.M.R.R. forums and finally on the elected steering committee. (On the eve of this election, the coalition was also joined by the neighborhood group Ocean Park Electoral Network.) They hammered out a set of principles of unity and a common program, and in the same way chose their candidates from among their own respected activists. All matters of principle, program and strategy require unanimity among the four S.M.R.R. organizations.

The result so far has been a radical-liberal coalition that works. Committed to full and free discussion and democratic decision making, the coalition bends rather than breaks when differences arise. This derives from a recognition that in today's America, splits among liberals, radicals and socialists can benefit only the right and the status quo. S.M.R.R. has also consciously abandoned the left's disdain for "practical politics" and works hard at translating abstract theory and political principles into effective action in the electoral arena. Its community organizers know how to use the latest techniques of political polling, computer-directed mailing and television persuasion, but they also rely on old-fashioned face-to-face politics—talking to people about issues important to them in language they understand.

S.M.R.R. mobilizes hundreds of volunteers and employs block captains, precinct walking, door-to-door canvassing and "phone banking" to raise money, identify supporters and sway the wavering. In other words, they do the tedious, exhausting, sometimes threatening but unavoidable work needed to reach people and give them an alternative vision and coherent program.

Even before the electoral sweep in April, 80 percent of Santa Monica's residents who are tenants had already learned that being governed by the left offers direct benefits in their lives. Rent control was introduced in this city, not from the top by a city council bending to its constituents' demands but from the bottom up, as a tenant-organized initiative. The movement actually amended the city charter and created a radically new governmental form: an autonomous, democratically elected rent board, empowered with the comprehensive authority to regulate rent levels, control the removal of rental housing units for conversion into condominiums or any other use and impose a good-cause requirement for the eviction of tenants. There is no other rent board quite like it, and it sets an extraordinary precedent—that not just the propertied but all the people have inviolable economic rights, and that they also have the right and ability to participate fully in the major economic decisions affecting them.

Since the day the charter amendment was passed, the rent board has been under siege: in person by outraged landlords, in the courts by suits to declare the law unconstitutional (for denying landlords equal protection under the law, for violating their right to privacy and for taking private property without compensation) and in two local

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and state initiatives to wipe out rent control—both defeated.

The movement suffered its first serious setback on the eve of April's election, however, when a Superior Court judge declared that the rent board's method of calculating permissible rent increases was "confiscatory." The judge said the law fails to give landlords a "just and reasonable return" on their investment. The question is, what is an "investment"? The rent board's decisions, which have limited rents in Santa Monica to an annual increase of 6.7 percent, compared with 18 percent for vacated apartments in nearby Los Angeles, have been based on defining "investment" as the price the landlords paid for their apartment buildings rather than their current market value. The judge ordered the rent board to come up with new regulations to allow apartment owners to charge higher rents. These are now under consideration. Whatever the immediate result, the judge's ruling is likely to be appealed by either side and fought all the way to the Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, the newly elected council majority has already reorganized city government in ways designed to maximize community services and enhance democratic city planning. Major innovations are a municipal solar utility and a public enterprises division of government. The first aims to provide an exemplary model of local government initiative in promoting and financing residential solar energy systems. The second will coordinate existing city enterprises (like the bus lines, civic auditorium and the pier) and develop new money-making ones to provide community health, recreation, art and entertainment facilities without raising taxes.

S.M.R.R. candidates promised in the campaign to curb high-rise development and expand the affordable housing supply, so that Santa Monica wouldn't become "an exclusive haven for the rich." They also committed themselves to encouraging the emergence of a network of neighborhood associations to let residents participate directly in shaping the city's economic life. In fact, the first official act of the new council majority was to declare a six-month "moratorium" on most new commercial, industrial and residential construction in the city—bringing denunciations of them as "criminals" from affected investors packed into the council chambers. Task forces composed of ordinary citizens and a planning commissioner, with a council member as liaison, are preparing recommendations for a new city development plan and for ways to bring neighborhood residents into the planning process. This is not a trivial matter. In 1979 and again in 1980, more than $100 million flowed into construction of department stores, office buildings and financial centers in this lovely city by the sea, four times as much as in 1977 and ten times the figure of five years earlier.

In the months to come, the question before the people of Santa Monica will be to decide where the future flow of private investment in the city is to be channeled, how, by whom and for what social objectives. The resolution of this question, like rent control, will surely involve sharp political struggles and judicial challenges. In November 1980, President Carter's Council on Development Choices urged that local governments be stripped of authority to impose rent control, and the Senate has recommended withholding Federal funds from cities with rent-control laws. Now Santa Monica has added, in a modest way, the democratization of the investment process to its local agenda.

What happens here will set a national example. It will surely be watched attentively by other cities and by major investors not immediately affected by this small city's affairs. Questions before the people of Santa Monica may eventually come before Congress and the Supreme Court. If so, Santa Monica will have played a crucial role in putting the issue of "economic democracy" on the national agenda. Maybe this is what *The Wall Street Journal* had in mind when, at this time last year, its editorials alerted readers to the "rent control activists" and "old New Leftists" of Santa Monica, lamented their "hostility to big business" and warned that "the Santa Monica case can't simply be dismissed as a teapot tempest." □

NUCLEAR REARMAMENT IN BRITAIN

Stormy Seas for The Trident Sub

ROBERT C. ALDRIDGE

Back in December 1974, British Defense Secretary Roy Mason announced a ten-year plan to cut the United Kingdom's costly global commitments. He vowed to save $11.2 billion in military spending over the next decade and reduce civilian employees and arms contracts accordingly. Britain's annual military budget was then about $8.6 billion.

A little over three years later, in April 1978, seven North Atlantic Treaty Organization defense ministers met in Denmark with then European Supreme Commander Gen. Alexander Haig. The topic of their secret discussions was the modernization of theater nuclear forces. Britain's military budget had by then risen to $13.5 billion a year.

In late 1979, the United States announced plans to deploy longer reaching and more accurate Pershing-2 medium-range ballistic missiles and Tomahawk ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCMs) in Europe as part of NATO's nuclear updating. At almost the same time, secret U.S.-U.K. talks were held to arrange Britain's purchase of Trident-1 missiles for equipping a new fleet of submarines. Trident-1 is America's newest operational submarine-launched ballistic missile and is currently being deployed in refitted Poseidon submarines. It will eventually give the

Robert C. Aldridge, an aerospace engineer, worked sixteen years for Lockheed helping to design Polaris missiles, the MIRVs for Poseidon and a maneuvering warhead for Trident SLBMs. He is the author of two books: The Counterforce Syndrome *(Institute for Policy Studies) and* First Strike *(TBS-Britannica, Tokyo).*

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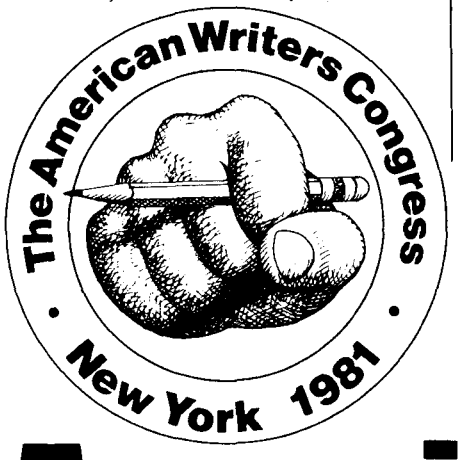

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United States first-strike capability [see Aldridge: "Trident: The Devil's Pitchfork," *The Nation*, December 27, 1980].

On July 15, 1980, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher announced that an agreement had been reached whereby her country would purchase 100 Trident-1s at a cost of $2.5 billion, of which $2.3 billion would go to Lockheed, the manufacturer. The purchase is part of an $11.5 billion program to build four, or possibly five, new strategic submarines. Britain's current year defense budget has climbed to about $20 billion—or more than twice what it was seven years ago when Roy Mason promised a decade's savings of $11.2 billion.

Britain's missile-launching submarines are assigned to the European Supreme Command with two reservations: only the Prime Minister may authorize any missile launches, and Britain retains the right to order their launch independently. Apparently the new Trident missiles will be subject to the same conditions; Mrs. Thatcher stated in a letter to Jimmy Carter that the new submarines will be under NATO command except when the British government "may decide that supreme national interests are at stake."

This newly announced Trident deal is not the first of its kind. Britain's nuclear undersea fleet is currently equipped with Polaris-A3 missiles, the same third-generation Polaris with which some U.S. subs are armed. They were purchased under the 1962 Nassau Agreement between Prime Minister Harold Macmillan and President Kennedy. Construction of the four British boats, known as the Resolution Class, was authorized the following year, and they entered service between October 1967 and December 1969. Their home port is on the Clyde Estuary. At least one is always on-station, often two, and occasionally three.

Although the Polaris missiles were purchased from Lockheed, the warheads were manufactured in the U.K. as a way of retaining a modicum of British autonomy. Development on the latest version, called Chevaline by the British, was started in 1973 with U.S. help and at U.S. facilities. All flight testing took place at Cape Canaveral, Florida, and nuclear testing was conducted at the Nevada Test Site. Last October 25, the eleventh joint test conducted under the 1958 Atomic Energy Defense Agreement between the two countries was detonated 1,400 feet beneath Yucca Flat. It was code-named "Dutchess."

Production of the 200-kiloton Chevaline is now under way. It has an improved guidance system for better accuracy and can maneuver during flight, ostensibly to evade the sixty-four Soviet anti-ballistic missiles encircling Moscow. More likely, however, the Chevaline's maneuverability is designed to allow course corrections during flight. Each missile carries three warheads which explode in a predetermined pattern around a single target—they are not separately targeted like U.S. MIRV (multiple independently targeted re-entry vehicles) warheads. Chevaline is said to be technically operational, but there are reports that financial and managerial foul-ups ballooned its $2 billion development cost.

Under Prime Minister Thatcher's modernization program, the four or five new submarines will replace the Resolution Class boats in the early 1990s. Nuclear reactor fuel will also be purchased from the United States. Each sub will carry sixteen missiles and the fleet is expected to remain in service until 2020 A.D.

Contracts for long-leadtime components for the Trident missiles have already been placed with U.S. companies. These missiles can fly 4,000 nautical miles and will be able to reach their Soviet targets even while the launching submarine is in port. That means every sub will remain on-target at all times, which is not possible with existing Polaris missiles, which have a range of only 2,500 miles.

Each of the sixteen Tridents on each submarine will carry eight MIRVs—the first Britain has had. They will enable a single submarine to attack 128 targets rather than the Polaris's current sixteen. And because the new submarines will be on-station even while in port, they will collectively and continuously threaten 512 targets (640 if five subs are built). That is a considerable increase from today's ability to attack a mere sixteen targets when only one sub is out to sea. Moreover, Britain's new strategic force will undoubtedly use America's Navstar navigation satellites for pinpointing Russian missile silos, thus making it an adjunct to American first-strike capability.

That the U.K.'s strategic nuclear force is more than just a status symbol becomes apparent when Britain's military power is stacked up against Germany's, with the latter's vastly superior army. But in order for Britain to retain absolute control of its strategic system, the new warheads for Trident must be built by the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaster, makers of the costly Chevaline. That will require about ten years' work, and it is expected the fissile material will be obtained from the United States. Flight and underground nuclear testing will also undoubtedly be done at U.S. facilities. The *Manchester Guardian* has doubts about autonomous control, however. It has called attention to the fact that Trident "is a wholly new American system requiring new technology in the production of warheads. (Indeed Britain might not be able to produce the warheads by itself, so that the concept of independence is worn slightly thin.)" The *Guardian* also points to the conflict between entering a program that would require nuclear testing into the 1990s and Britain's announced support for the comprehensive Test Ban Treaty now being negotiated.

It is interesting that secret discussions on the Trident sale coincided so closely with the late 1979 announcement that the United States would deploy Pershing-2 and cruise missiles in Europe. Britain has agreed to allow 160 cruise missiles to be stationed at two U.S. air bases on its soil. When they are in place in 1983, they will be the first land-based U.S. missiles stationed in Britain. The Trident deal and the cruise missiles have touched off a nationwide debate and protest demonstrations in Britain. Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, the organization that spearheaded the 1960s "Ban the Bomb" movement, is now reactivated and gaining strength. The opposition Labor Party has also taken a firm

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stand against Trident, and pledges that it will revise the agreement if it regains power before the program is completed. The party is somewhat split on the cruise missiles, however; one faction regards them as a possible alternative to Trident, since an effective force of them would cost only one-sixth as much. Nevertheless, although hotly denied by U.K. defense officials, speculation that Trident sales are tied to Britain's acquiescence to cruise-missile deployment seems to be valid. Another element in the Trident deal is a promise by the United States to buy $470 million worth of British Rapier anti-aircraft missiles to protect American bases in England. In addition, British troops must be paid to operate them.

Another hotbed of discontent is inter-service rivalry. The Royal Air Force, which had strategic responsibility before Polaris, had hopes of regaining control of the next generation of strategic weapons. The British Army is incensed about the disproportionate funding that will go to pay for Trident. And even the Royal Navy has its qualms. Trident will consume half the navy's yearly equipment allotment for several years. Naturally, the navy is worried about how to prevent deterioration in other areas. Navy Minister Keith Speed has now been dismissed because of his disagreement. Thatcher has used this occasion to abolish separate ministers for each service, thereby eliminating inter-service rivalries.

On the other hand, the Thatcher administration claims that choosing Trident will postpone peak nuclear modernization spending until the end of the decade. They argue that Trident will cost only 3 percent of Britain's defense budget over fifteen years (the *London Observer* predicts it will be more like 5 percent). The government plays the familiar refrain that this added spending will provide jobs. Although numerous studies have shown that military contracting is inefficient in creating jobs in comparison with equivalent funding in almost any other sector of the economy, the predicted job increase is probably the most attractive argument Trident supporters can muster. Unemployment in Britain has now hit 10.4 percent, the highest figure since the 1930s. Two-thirds of those recently polled labeled unemployment as the most urgent problem in the country.

Despite these domestic problems, the Thatcher government displays an unabashed intention to hike military spending. Francis Pym, British Defense Secretary until his recent appointment as Government Leader in the House of Commons, told Parliament last year that the Thatcher administration was "prepared to put defense at the top of our priorities" and that "other programs have had to be reduced more than would otherwise have been necessary to allow room for extra defense spending."

As far as Trident is concerned, the best advice London can follow was given by the *Manchester Guardian*: Britain should resign altogether from the concept of strategic nuclear deterrence. That can be done very easily and economically were the British able to subordinate status and tradition to common sense—and if they were also strong enough to resist U.S. arm-twisting aimed at keeping them a nuclear pawn and a profitable market for arms sales. Such a rebellion would set the stage for true arms-reduction negotiations between the superpowers, and would set a sorely needed example amid the growing global war hysteria. Britain may never again have this chance to help the cause of world peace. □

Writers Congress

(*Continued From Page 5*)

States. Many others could be cited from recent months and years. Yet writers themselves remain largely unorganized, isolated and unconvinced they are able to influence the changes sweeping their profession. For that reason, The Nation Institute (a nonprofit affiliate of *The Nation*), in conjunction with a group of distinguished writers, has issued a call for an American Writers Congress. [An ad appears on page 18.] The Congress will be the first event since the 1930s to gather together writers regardless of professional standing, geographic location, or membership in any organization. We believe it will be of signal importance to writers and all other citizens concerned with the future of writing in America.

The call to the Congress follows:

Writers in America face a crisis. Rapidly advancing concentration in the communications industry threatens as never before to exclude and silence serious writers who are out of political or literary fashion. New writers find it more and more difficult to publish, and even established writers are subject to what novelist Mary Lee Settle has recently called "the censorship of slow-moving books." Government support for the arts is being slashed. Attacks on writers—libel suits, book-bannings, censorship by government and special interest groups—are increasing all across the country.

More than the private interests of writers is at stake: there is also a vital public interest in the character, quality, and critical spirit of our literary culture.

Therefore, the Nation Institute, a nonprofit organization associated with *The Nation* magazine, hereby issues a call for an American Writers Congress, which will be held at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York City, October 9-12, 1981.

Through panels, workshops, roundtables, caucuses, and plenary sessions, the Congress will examine writers' rights, bread-and-butter issues, and the role of writing and writers in the United States today. The Congress will provide a forum for writers of all descriptions—poets, playwrights, novelists, journalists, scholars, critics, and the associations, guilds, and unions that represent them—to talk to one another and to the country at large, and to develop new ways of working together in defense of common interests.

The Writers Congresses of the 1930s were a reaction to the Depression at home and fascism abroad. The MORE conventions of the 1970s responded to widespread dissatisfaction with mainstream media. Today many writers are disturbed by the increasing commercialism that threatens their ability to survive as writers; others are concerned by the intolerance associated with the rise of the right; still others express alarm at the debasement of literary culture caused by recent political and economic developments. These issues pose fundamental questions for every writer—and reader—in America, and demand an active response. The American Writers Congress is not only a forum for airing all these concerns but a first step toward doing something about them.

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Notes From Our Gulag

SUE M. HALPERN

IN THE BELLY OF THE BEAST: Letters From Prison. *By Jack Henry Abbott. Random House. 170 pp. $11.95.*

LITTLE BOY BLUE. *By Edward Bunker. The Viking Press. 301 pp. $13.95.*

Jack Henry Abbott began the correspondence that was to become *In the Belly of the Beast* with one arm chained to the crossbar of his bed in the Butner, North Carolina, Federal Correctional Institution. He addressed his letter to Norman Mailer; having learned that he was writing a book about Gary Gilmore, the death-row inmate who demanded execution, Abbott did not believe Mailer could make sense of his subject without first understanding the nature of Gilmore's lifelong relationship with prison. Such an understanding, Abbott contended, is gleaned only after years of imprisonment in any of the six "top-level" prisons in America, places like Leavenworth or San Quentin. Specifically, Abbott wished to convey something about the effect of the most insidious fact of life in prison—violence, in all its hideous permutations.

Abbott's knowledge was extensive and up-to-date; for ten days prior to writing Mailer he had been kept naked and chained spread-eagle in a psychological observation tank where he was beaten and abused by prison staff. But more to the point, at 32, Abbott had spent all but nine and a half months of the past twenty years in captivity, yet the most serious crime he had committed in "free society" was bank robbery while a fugitive. Before that, however, as Abbott entered the third year of an indeterminate sentence for having written a check with insufficient funds at the age of 18, he killed an inmate during a fight.

Uncharacteristically, Mailer accepted Abbott's offer of correspondence. Then, as Mailer writes in the preface of the book:

> A long letter came back. It was remarkable. I answered it and another came. It was just as remarkable. I don't think two weeks went by before I was in the middle of a thoroughgoing correspondence. I felt all the awe one knows before a phenomenon. Abbott had his own voice. I had heard no other like it.

Jack Abbott is, indeed, a stunning writer and a tenacious thinker. He is also a man whose formal education ended when he was jailed at 12, a man whose respect for words was wrested from the unspeakable silence of a decade of solitary confinement. Abbott schooled himself in philosophy, theoretical physics and great books. In prison he found Marx and a sustaining belief in Communism. But his was a singular dialectic: "Nine-tenths of my vocabulary I have never *heard* spoken," he states. Perhaps, then, it is not surprising that Abbott has a Conrad-like appreciation of the texture of the foreign language in which he writes. Abbott brings an ingenuous lyrical beauty to an exposition of the most inhuman behavior, making that behavior, by contrast, more atrocious still. Yet to congratulate Abbott for the triumph of his native literary talent and leave it at that is to abuse him further, for it is a self-indulgent deception, a comfortable way to alleviate our complicity in the torture of men, women and children in American prisons.

Abbott, like Gary Gilmore, shares the common lineage of the "state-raised" convict: broken home, foster care, juvenile hall, reform school, prison. Considering that Abbott was until recently imprisoned in a maximum-security jail, having been, by his own account, written up for violence more frequently than any other inmate in the Federal system, it would appear that the judge who first saw fit to deliver the 9-year-old child to the strong arm of juvenile justice was prophetic. Considering, too, that a substantial number of hard-core convicts are state-raised, it is just possible that many judges are equally so. Abbott's analysis, however, is less obliging: the first judge is the hanging judge; state-raising is a process of socialization that insures our maximum-security prisons are filled beyond capacity.

Abbott's logic is unremitting. A state-raised convict grows up as a child and lives as an adult in an environment where "no contradiction is allowed openly. You are not allowed to change. You are only allowed to submit; 'agreement' does not exist (it implies equality). You are the rebellious adolescent who must obey and submit to the judgment of 'grown-ups.'" Moreover, the state-raised convict lacks emotional maturity because he has been deprived of normal social intercourse; "his emotions are impulsive, unmellowed," and he defiantly adopts the prisoner's code—an ethic of revenge-violence rooted in the capacity to kill:

> It is what makes us effective, men whose judgments impinge on others, on the world: Dangerous killers who act alone. . . . The model we emulate is a fanatically defiant and alienated individual who cannot imagine what forgiveness is, or mercy, or tolerance, because he has no *experience* of such values.

In this world a man can be killed for a misdirected gesture or a piece of toast.

Although inmates are the usual victims of the prisoner's code and, moreover, guards are armed, the prison staff nevertheless relies on a panoply of punishments to enforce its rule. These range in intensity from workaday indignities to some of the more sophisticated tortures common to Soviet psychiatric prisons. The general prison population is able to escape the worst treatment, according to Abbott, because it submits to the routine goadings and gantlets:

> A prisoner who is not state-raised tolerates the situation because of his social maturity prior to incarceration. He knows things are different outside prison. But the state-raised convict has no conception of any difference. He lacks experience and, hence, maturity. His judgment is untempered, rash.

As a consequence, the state-raised convict tends to elicit the most savage treatment. But Abbott does not hold the state-raised convict responsible for inviting this abuse, and he does not confuse it with words like reform, rehabilitation or correction. Nor should he. The tortures he describes barely correspond to a pernicious sense of retribution. What human being deserves to be punished by being

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stripped to his underwear and kept in a cell that has no bed or running water, where the concrete floor inclines to a hole in the center and excrement radiates from the hole to within a foot of the walls? And who merits a drug like Prolixin, which, according to Abbott, is administered arbitrarily by prison guards:

> One injection lasts for two weeks. Every two weeks you receive an injection. These drugs, in this family, do not calm or sedate the nerves. They attack. They attack from so deep inside you, you cannot locate the source of the pain. The drugs turn your nerves in upon yourself. . . . These drugs are designed to render you so totally involved with yourself physically that all you can do is concentrate your entire being on holding yourself together. . . . You cannot stop trembling.

These brutalities, intended—at best—to break the inmate and make him manageable, have an opposite, equally shattering, result. The perverse process of maturation is complete when "hard-core" ceases to be an adjective and becomes, instead, the essence of a man.

> I know how to live through anything they could possibly dish up for me.
>
> I've been subjected to strip-cells, blackout cells, been chained to the floor and wall; I've lived through the beatings, of course; *every* drug science has invented to "modify" my behavior—I have endured. Starvation was once natural to me; I have no qualms about eating insects in my cell or living in my body wastes if it means survival. . . . When they say "What doesn't destroy me makes me stronger," that is what they mean.
>
> . . . And after it is all done to you, after you have been robbed completely of fear and nothing anyone can threaten you with can constrain you—what point is served by keeping you in prison? It is no longer possible to punish you. You have been rendered unpunishable.

Abbott is not being sarcastic when he writes: "I feel that if I ever did *adjust to prison*, I could by that alone never adjust to society." Of course, if he never adjusts to prison, he will never be released. But that is what justice comes down to when sentences are indeterminate and parole is the reward of "good behavior" on the recommendation of people with a gross sense of goodness. In short, no one gets out of here alive. But some do get out. Jack Abbott was paroled on June 5.

The corrosive effect of juvenile justice is also addressed in Edward Bunker's latest novel, *Little Boy Blue*, the story of an 11-year-old boy's journey from a broken home to reform school—the making of a criminal. Like Abbott, Bunker knows his terrain. He spent many of his young years in prison; there he was first encouraged in his writing by *The Nation*'s Carey McWilliams. Bunker's protagonist, Alex Hammond, is intelligent and good-natured but is periodically overtaken by an illimitable rage, an inarticulate expression of the despair he feels at not being able to live with his father, his only living parent. It does not matter that his violence is not malicious when, in a fit, he assaults the housemother of the last in a succession of state homes he has been placed in. The housemother threatens to call the police and Alex runs away, only to be caught a few days later, a certified delinquent, wanted for robbery and attempted murder; he has narrowly missed killing the shopkeeper whose store he has burgled.

Once he is in the maw of the criminal justice system, Alex Hammond is succulent fare. In less than two years, the boy is in and out of five institutions, each more criminal than the last. Alex escalates his inevitable institutional ascent by a tendency for escape and recapture. Each time that he is on the streets, living by his wits, his proficiency at criminal activity increases. And each stint in jail brings the young prisoner "up-to-code"; at 13 he avenges the theft of his shoes by trying to kill another boy. When, at long last, an aunt and uncle materialize to give Alex the home he has always craved, he is not able to take it. Alex leaves his relatives for life on the street, armed robbery and recapture. His future at San Quentin is assured.

Although this is a "semi-autobiographical novel," it is, paradoxically,

GROUNDS AND BELIEFS

We say that fact yields truth. But how? mindlessly, as fields
Their crop of grass? hastily, as blackened underbrush
Its rush of blueberries? or reluctantly, as a
Surly guard hands over prisoners to the bearer
Of the great Emperor's seal? But there is this yielding:
In among careless weeds and boring, necessary
Perennials, out of the foul but hopeful magma
Of what indeed it falls to us all to be and do—
Pain, irritation, tedium, rage, sly childishness,
Longing, despair amid the bad weather and the good—
Out of all this muck the particular plant springs forth,
Like a laughing nymph appearing out of the green bank
Of one's own secret river, what the place had been for.

Suppose this were a sprig of myrtle: from what tears, sweat
And wrinkled, ungardened beds does she spring? Dear Olive
And famous but weary Laurel grow here, labelled with
Their names and histories, and were I a husbandman
Of garlands I'd lay out Myrtle whose deepening green
Crowns all our couplings and shades all our passionate beds.
Yet she would end up like all the others: "Look for truth
Not in the dusty books, but in her eyes" Or "Seek not
To penetrate the eastern mysteries, but enter
Her and be truly wise" Or "Myrtle's motion beneath
Your body's hot doings makes the world turn" "Her cry of
Coming will sound for eternity in the long halls
Of desire." Like the others, Myrtle's one for the books.

John Hollander

John Hollander's most recent book of poetry is Blue Wine and Other Poems *(Johns Hopkins). He is professor of English at Yale University.*

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never wholly convincing. Bunker's attempt to make the reader like Alex and sympathize with his situation is vitiated by the author's failure to dehumanize Alex enough: he is capable of cold-blooded murder but is never emptied of his tears. By sacrificing verisimilitude for palatability, Bunker wastes the potential of fiction to render the story more real by invention; the novel is never more than a story.

Little Boy Blue, nevertheless, like *In the Belly of the Beast*, leaves no doubt where our gulag is. But it is Jack Abbott's story that emerges as larger than life and must not be treated as fiction. □

A Stunning Inarticulateness

ROBERT HOUSTON

WHAT WE TALK ABOUT WHEN WE TALK ABOUT LOVE. *By Raymond Carver. Alfred A. Knopf. 159 pp. $9.95.*

Raymond Carver is a pernicious alchemist. Take this setting, for example, from the beginning of the title story of his new collection, *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love*: "The four of us were sitting around his kitchen table drinking gin. Sunlight filled the kitchen from the big window behind the sink. There were Mel and me and his second wife, Teresa—Terri, we called her—and my wife, Laura. We lived in Albuquerque then. But we were all from someplace else."

Nearly all of the elements of a Carver story are here: people with the most ordinary of local habitations and names, rootless, with busted marriages behind them, who drink cheap gin at kitchen tables and for whom the outside world arrives over kitchen sinks. Base metals, dross indeed, to most writers. How many nowadays would have the gumption to attempt to dazzle, to move, with such clay? Or more to the point, how many could succeed in molding it into some of the finest and most original stories of their generation?

That's why Raymond Carver is an alchemist. And that's why he is pernicious. With his primer-simple language, his terrible lucidity, his universe-in-a-grain-of-sand vision, he is becoming an Influence. Already student writers, burnt out on standard "epiphany" stories or unreadable experimentalism, are accusing one another of writing "Raymond Carver" stories in their workshops.

But what a healthy perniciousness! The good writers will soon enough realize that Carver's techniques are inseparable from his vision, which is in turn inseparable from being Raymond Carver. But what they will have come away with is freedom. They will have been with a master who tells them by his work that they can make new kinds of stories which remember that fiction is about human beings, not only ideas, and not, for heaven's sake, linguistic theory.

Just what is it that makes Carver's stories, and especially the seventeen in *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love*, as importantly innovative as they are? It's not that they startle us as messages from another universe: a dedicated literary pathologist could find trace elements of a familiar tradition behind them—Kafka, Beckett, the Hemingway of "Hills Like White Elephants." I think rather that it is that they come so startlingly from *our* universe, the universe of working-class America, that makes them so gut-wrenching. There are no Beverly Hills boutique owners in Carver, no politicians, no radicals. His people aren't articulate or introspective like Henry James's Americans; they are, in fact, as far from Henry James as Carver's style is. Nor are they "workers" in the tradition of the proletarian literature of the 1930s. They resist all pigeonholing with a stubborn, inarticulate obstinacy.

It is that inarticulateness that makes them stunningly recognizable. A saxophone player in an Arizona mining town, in his cups, once said to me, "You know, by being inarticulate, you can say more than you ever thought you could." That is great wisdom for a fiction writer. And it is Raymond Carver's wisdom. His characters never have conversations; they speak blindly at one another, hinting, covering up pain, despair, even love. Everything in a Carver story is designed to hide something else. And it is Carver's genius that he has been able to make his readers feel the pathos and terror in that.

Moreover, Carver's characters never have "epiphanies," those flashes of redeeming revelation that Joyce and Flannery O'Connor were such masters of—but that, sadly, have become shopworn by overhandling in so many writing workshops. Yet there *is* revelation, a revelation that Carver locates not in the characters but in the reader. Carver's characters feel and suffer, they grope, they instinctively understand that something terrible or important is happening to them. They sense the menace of ordinary life, they feel the wind from the chasm below the cliff's edge that they, that we, all dance along. But they can never quite bring themselves to lean over and look into the chasm, to put into words just what those terrible or important things are. It is up to us to do that. We must experience those revelations for them. Carver has led us to the cliff's edge, and *we* must look over it. And therein lies the devastating power of the stories.

As illustration, take another of the stories in the collection, "I Could See the Smallest Things." The setting is a ghostly, moonlit night in an unimportant suburb. A woman's husband is passed out in their bed, something we sense is far from unusual. She can't sleep, and wanders into the backyard in her robe. A next-door neighbor is up, too, pouring poison on slugs in the moonlight. She and the neighbor talk, saying nothing that means much, overtly. Yet the woman is *feeling* something, something inseparable from that moment and mood which she can't put into words, about the awful desolation of her life, the loathsomeness of her marriage, her speechless loneliness. She goes back inside, lies down in bed and listens to the drunken breathing of her husband. At this point, Joyce might redeem the moment with an intense, lyrical passage such as the one that ends "The Dead," or O'Connor with a vision, like the souls rising into heaven in "Revelation." But not Carver. His character tells us, "I thought for a minute of the world outside my house, and then I didn't have any more thoughts except the thought that I had to hurry up and sleep." We are left as alone and desolate as she, with the burden of the vision on ourselves.

What makes all that work, of course, is a story whose mood is so finely tuned that the slightest knock, the briefest

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miss, would kill the entire engine. Carver made his reputation first as a poet, a good poet. In his fiction, he still is.

Sometimes, of course, the engine needs some tuning. In one of the stories, "Tell the Women We're Going," Carver resorts to a violence he hasn't earned for an ending, and comes near to breaking his own primal rule: "No tricks." He is trying too hard to "say something." Yet even there, the rightness of his language, the landscape of his characters, compels.

I say landscape of his characters. That is very nearly the only landscape you find in Carver and, in truth, the only landscape you need. Naturally, the stories are given physical worlds to take place in. But description is relentlessly minimal. Perhaps it is simply that the world the characters inhabit is all too familiar to call for much description. But I think Carver is after something beyond that. The world his people ultimately live in, the one they are locked into inside themselves, admits no landscape outside itself. That they live dull lives, have dull jobs in dull places, only serves to frame and accent something more important: Carver is a hunter of souls, and is wise enough to know that souls are never dull, that their scenery is infinitely more subtle than mere mountains.

One more thing. That there are certain kinds of similarities in these stories by no means implies that their author knows only one song. The individual stories are as varied, as surprising, at times as gently bizarre as the souls of their characters. In one, "The Viewfinder," a woman whose children have grown away from her decides for a while that a handless, door-to-door photographer is the magic charm that will bring them back to her. In another, "So Much Water So Close to Home," a woman tries to cope with the knowledge that her husband and his cronies wouldn't interrupt a fishing trip to report they had found a dead girl. In "After the Denim," a young couple's cheating in a bingo game gives the relief of rage to an old man's despair about age and his dying wife. "Sacks" has a father in a bleak airport lounge trying to explain to an insensitive prig of a son about the affair that cost him his marriage. A man in "Why Don't You Dance" deals with his own dead marriage by arranging his furniture in his front yard and selling it off to a young couple who must first, he insists, dance in his driveway. Husbands and wives, parents and children, age and death and love and strength and failure and survival—all the things it ultimately matters to write about are here. And all are cast into fiction with the alchemist's final skill. As W.H. Auden suggested in "Musée des Beaux Arts," tragedy is most tragic when it's impure, an alloy: one part despair, two parts irony.

Is there a better contemporary writer of short stories than Raymond Carver? Perhaps a handful as good, but none better. Stanley Elkin says that Carver's "rumpled men and ragged women will break your heart." He's right. Yet there's more to these stories than that. Nearly 200 years ago, Wordsworth and Coleridge started a revolution when they proclaimed their aim to write in "the language really used by men."

SONGS FOR A WOMAN

1
Your body is white like sand
in which children never played

your eyes beautiful and sad
like illustrated flowers in a school book

wisps of your hair as it falls
like smoke from Cain's sacrifice—

vision: I must kill my brother
my brother must kill me.

2
All night your empty shoes
cried out beside your bed

your right hand fell out from your dream
your hair studied night-speech
from a torn school book of wind

the curtains moved
as ambassadors of foreign powers.

3
If you open your coat
my love must widen

if you wear that round, white beret
my blood must redden

wherever you love
furniture must be removed from the room

trees, mountains, seas—all of it
gone from the narrow world.

4
When you smile
serious ideas suddenly get drowsy

all night the mountains keep silent at your side—
at morning, the sand goes out with you, to sea

when you do nice things to me
all industry shuts down—light, heavy.

Yehuda Amichai
(translated from the Hebrew
by David Rosenberg)

Yehuda Amichai is one of Israel's leading poets. This poem will appear in a new collection, Love Poems, *to be published by Harper & Row in September.*

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Neither of them quite achieved that. In *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love*, Raymond Carver has. And it is terrifying. □

Eloquent Dramas of Survival

ROBERT B. SHAW

THE COLLECTED STORIES OF CAROLINE GORDON. *Introduction by Robert Penn Warren. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 352 pp. $17.95.*

Over the years critics have labeled Caroline Gordon in terms that, however well-meaning, may have helped make her an author more respected than read. She is known as a craftsman: tales of her aid to Flannery O'Connor and Walker Percy at the beginning of their careers, and of her own exacting apprenticeship to Ford Madox Ford, are widespread enough to have promoted an image of her as a writer's writer. Readers to whom talk of craft suggests nuts and bolts rather than imaginative vivacity are understandably discouraged. The well-made story, like the well-made play, is thought to be too schematic to be convincing, which is bad enough, and too old-fashioned, which is worse.

Gordon is also known as a regional writer—a Southerner by birth, breeding and conviction, the wife of Allen Tate and the peer of the "Agrarian" writers with whom Tate took his stand. Again, the label is no great drawing card. To say that Gordon's stories derive from a detailed knowledge of the land, customs and social levels of southeast Kentucky in the early part of this century may make her works sound more like anthropology than fiction. Regional consciousness, like craftsmanship, is not much looked for in fiction nowadays, although degenerate forms of it are easy to come by on TV, e.g., *Dallas*.

Gordon's *Collected Stories* reveals both the truth and the undue simplicity of the categories in which critics have confined her. Even the briefest sampling of the prose indicates that the triumph of her craftsmanship is her unobtrusiveness as a narrator. Though her themes are often similar to Faulkner's, her style more resembles Hemingway's in its speed, compactness and clarity. Her climaxes, which are sometimes shatteringly violent, seem inevitable but not forced. What in a lesser writer's hands would be melodrama earns the name of tragedy in hers. The same sense of proportion oversees the regional aspect of the stories. To Gordon, as to Faulkner and Welty and other good Southern writers, the South is not simply a region but a state of mind.

One of the charms of Gordon's fiction is that it is filled with useful hints about fly fishing, opossum hunting and curing tobacco, and there is a firm, unaffected beauty in her descriptions of the country she knows best. But her most intense focus is on the human figures moving through these landscapes. Very little escapes Gordon when observing human beings: their vanities, their petty and profound deceptions, their easy yieldings to corruption all pass before her penetrating gaze. She sees as well the desperate, reluctant heroism people may rise to at crucial moments, often to their own surprise.

Many of the stories are dramas of survival, measuring the limits and counting the cost of human endurance. Those dealing with the Civil War—"Hear the Nightingale Sing," "The Forest of the South," "The Ice House"—starkly portray the defeat of the Confederacy. "War is hell, ma'am," said General Sherman to a Southern lady. The Southern lady who wrote these stories agrees, and shows, moreover, that the real hell is not loss in battle but the loss of human values, which neither side, winning or losing, can maintain in the heat of conflict or its exhausted aftermath. These historical fictions are remarkable for their avoidance of the costumed quaintness that usually besets the genre.

"The Captive," one of the longer stories, achieves an even more difficult verisimilitude than the Civil War pieces, as it is written in the first person. It is the story of a white woman taken captive by the Indians who have slaughtered her family. In more than thirty pages the pace never flags; on the simplest level this is one of the great American adventure stories. Here the theme of survival is present in its most extreme terms: it is only by learning the Indians' ways while living among them that the woman finally escapes and against all odds makes her way back to her own people. It is uncommon for an action story to feature as much depth of character as this one does. By creating a wholly believable voice for her protagonist, Gordon has made this all the more vivid an image of human resiliency.

Resiliency is evident, too, though not so wrenchingly tested, in the character of Aleck Maury, who appears in a number of these stories and is the hero of the immensely likable novel, *Aleck Maury, Sportsman*. Professor Maury, as his community calls him, is based on Gordon's father. A classical scholar who heads a boys' academy and a family man, he subordinates these attachments to the activities he thinks most important: hunting and fishing. The author views his success in centering his life around these pursuits with a mixture of amusement and respect. The stories are not so much records of an obsession as they are portraits of an artist: Maury is a man who is determined to give his imaginative vision embodiment, and does so against a background of field and stream and the cycling seasons. More than most men he is master of his fate, pleasurably aware of his singularity. Eyeing his sedentary relatives, he notes his distance from them:

> He saw time suddenly, a dull, leaden-colored fabric depending from the old lady's hands, from the hands of all of them, a blanket that they pulled about between them, now here, now there, trying to cover up their nakedness. Or they would cast it on the ground and creep in among the folds, finding one day a little more tightly rolled than another, but all of it everywhere the same dull gray substance. But time was a banner that whipped before him always in the wind! He stood on tiptoe to catch at the bright folds, to strain them to his bosom. . . . But they whipped by so fast and were whipping always ever faster.

Warmly humorous, the stories take on a poignant, autumnal note as they chronicle the closing years of Maury's career, the escape of time from his mastering hands. "Old Red," "The Last Day in the Field" and others of the Maury cycle are attractive simply as pastoral idylls, but they are impressive as well for their graceful fusing of the

Robert B. Shaw teaches in the English department at Yale University and is the author of a collection of poetry, Comforting the Wilderness *(Wesleyan).*

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naturalistic and symbolic. The old Aleck Maury's last shot in the twilight of a November day furnishes an emblem of his own mortality:

> [The bird] staggered, then zoomed up. Up, up, up, over the rim of the hill and above the tallest hickories. I saw it there for a second, its wings black against the gold light, before, wings still spread, it came whirling down, like an autumn leaf, like the leaves that were everywhere about us, all over the ground.

The perfect mating of cadence and image in this passage is typical of the lyric moments one often meets in Gordon's spare but resonant prose.

Some of the finer stories resist grouping, except in their daring mingling of disparate elements. In "The Brilliant Leaves," a romantic episode, a tryst in the woods, ends as fatal catastrophe. "One Against Thebes" manages the difficult feat of relating a child's first intimations of evil to a set of mythic archetypes—a Jungian approach to fiction that here, for once, escapes the manipulative creakiness that usually dogs such conscious raids on the unconscious. "The Petrified Woman" is a funny story about a Kentucky family reunion, a social comedy that ends with a flash of nightmare. The narrator, Professor Maury's young daughter, is as out of place as he is in the monstrously congregating "connection" of cousins, who all seem to share the same first names. She offers in her asides what is in effect the author's wry self-portrait, telling of how her father made her attend his boys' school, already at age 10 a lone woman in a man's world:

> There was a girls' school there too, Miss Robinson's, but he said I wouldn't learn anything if I went there till I was blue in the face, so I had to go to school with the boys. Sometimes I think that that is what makes me so peculiar.

The author's peculiarity sets her apart from other people, but it places her at the right vantage point to see more searchingly into their motives than they ever could themselves. And it gives her the detachment to report, often as if with a child's wonder, the humor and horror of what she sees. Caroline Gordon died recently at 86, within days of the publication of *Collected Stories*. It is the sort of coincidence she might have made use of in fiction; with her firm command of both pathos and irony, she would have made it convincing. □

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Merchants of Death

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

and enthusiast titles." Law Enforcement Associates of Belleville, New Jersey, offers you hand shockers for personal defense, spectrum analyzers and your own metal detector. My favorite advertisement, though, comes from a company in Atlanta that sells signs warning those about to be shot that they might be. "Don't Shoot Without Legal Warning," the headline proclaims. "Why be involved in legal entanglements? Let them know before you shoot!" For only 15 cents per square inch and 30 cents per letter you can have your own "No Trespassing: Survivors Will Be Prosecuted" sign to guard your property.

Such ads are the window dressing. The real business of these magazines is to sell guns, and everything that goes with them. FTL Marketing Corporation of North Hollywood, California, will furnish you with a .22-Auto Nine, including a cocking indicator, push-button safety, 6-groove rifling and light recoil. "The most powerful air pistol in its class," the BSA Scorpion is available from Precision Sports of Ithaca, New York. If pistols are not your fancy, you can still buy, through these magazines, knives, crossbows, samurai swords, cavalry sabers, machine guns and submachine guns, automatic rifles, bullets, holsters, shooting lessons, Nazi S.S. officers' belt buckles, "evil" business cards, guard dogs, telephone listening devices, new identity papers, acupressure techniques, Third Reich battle flags, T-shirts printed with a huge picture of a .38, survival manuals, detective badges and "a piece of English history," the last few guns of the defunct firm of Churchill, Atkin, Grant and Lang, auctioned off by Christie's and Abercrombie and Fitch, in Dallas. Also: U.S. Savings Bonds.

I would like to believe that the merchandising of this destruction is a kind of safety valve, an outlet for aggression that lets off steam in harmless ways. That is not the way commerce works, however. Not only the ads but the stories, the pictures, the classifieds and the tone of the magazines are most convincing. Cars are not sold to be kept in the garage. Guns are not sold to be mounted on walls.

American capitalism makes it easy to kill people. Guns, after all, are a commodity, and the unwritten law of American life is that thou shalt not seriously interfere with the buying and selling of commodities. We have been told many times that assassins simply walk into sporting goods stores, pick and choose carefully and then go out and shoot our national heroes.

In America, guns are a way of life, sometimes a political philosophy. To ban guns in this country would be like abolishing prayer in the Vatican. An America without guns is a society without meaning. Lacking the basic rudiments of a national culture and an identity as a distinct people, we have made the gun our character. To strip ourselves of guns would create a Jonestown for the entire people.

D.H. Lawrence understood. Why did people come to America, he asked? To find religious tolerance? Nonsense, for England was more tolerant of belief —and look at the religious persecution that took place here anyway. For freedom? Hardly, for freedom means belonging "to a living, organic, believing community, active in fulfilling some unfilled, perhaps unrealized purpose. . . . The most unfree souls go west, and shout of freedom." Americans came to America "to get away. Away from what? In the long run, away from themselves."

Escape is the primal American instinct, escape from the demands of community. Americans are not afraid of hard work; they sometimes destroy themselves by working beyond human limits. But they are afraid of *social* work, of the task of building together the common values that make it possible for people to share the same space. Never has a society that exalted the single individual so much valued the collective efforts of many individuals so

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little. When David Stockman asked why residents of Los Angeles should pay for New Yorkers to get to work, he was expressing, in brilliant condensed form, the political philosophy of the gun. Abandoning entire regions to barbarism because they are no longer attractive to capital investment is the 1980s version of lynching, only this time it's called public policy.

Four of the most precious values in Western political philosophy have been equality, liberty, justice and fraternity. In these conservative times, it is a commonplace to say that America has turned its back on these beliefs. Not true. All are as strong as ever. What has changed is that, more than ever before, each is pursued through the gun.

Possession of a firearm is the easiest path to that far-off region called equality. Equality of opportunity is difficult to achieve, equality of result almost impossible. But equality of violence, as these magazines illustrate, can be purchased for as little as $3. Consider the saga of John Shaw, as told by Massad Ayoob (a frequent contributor to these periodicals) in *Gun World*. When he first encountered shooting competition, John was a loser: "The guys with the top national scores . . . all seemed to be professional rangemasters, guys who had access to unlimited ammunition and practically live on the range." John would show them a thing or two. Specializing in freelance shooting, Shaw "made a point of picking the brains of the best shooters he could find."

Nose-to-the-grindstone, Shaw learned to shoot like Richard Nixon learned to run for office. By 1980, he was champ. "I never really excelled in anything before this," he confessed to *Gun World*. "I really believe this is a sport where the average guy can become national champion, if he wants to bad enough and learns how to take control of his objectives, internally. It's a great sport. Everyone shares their knowledge."

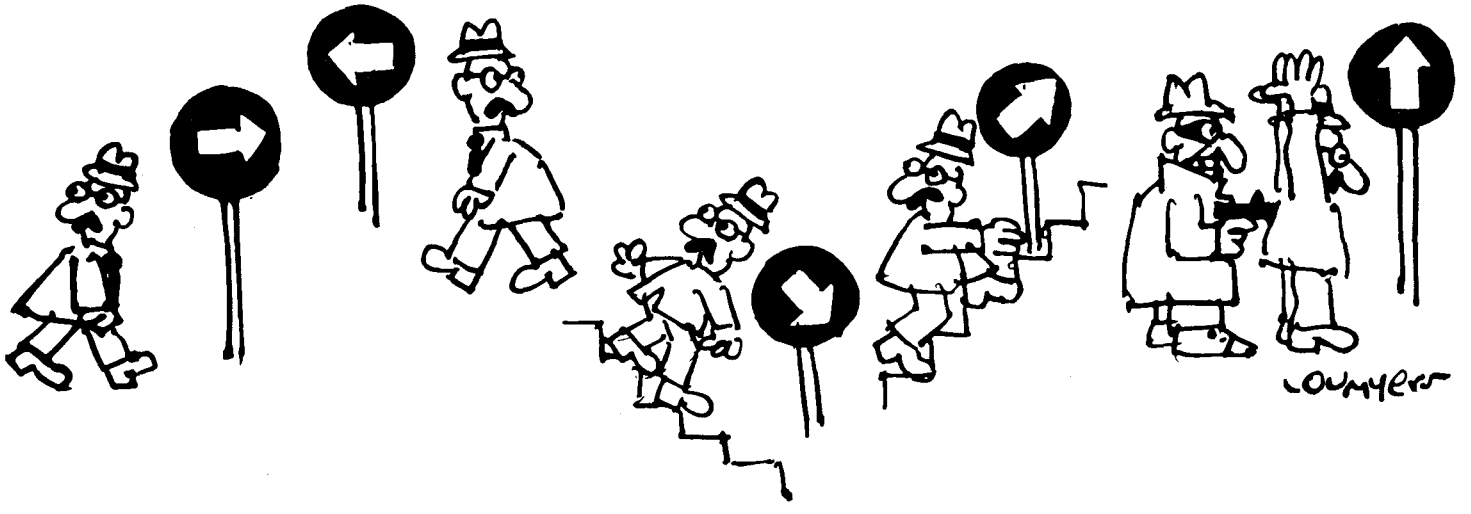
The gun, more than the Sermon on the Mount, is the symbol of American populism. No society before in human history has made weapons as cheaply, and put them in as many hands, as America. If the Model-T was the instrument of democracy in the first half of this century, the handgun plays that role in the second half.

When Patrick Henry said, "Give me liberty or give me death," he used the wrong conjunction; he should have proclaimed: "Give me liberty *and* give me death." Or so holds an entire issue of *Combat Illustrated* devoted to the theme: "Urban Warfare—How You Can Survive." *Combat Illustrated* is a magazine for all those G. Gordon Liddys out there, chafing in frustration at their lack of freedom in an organization society. Political philosophers have told us that freedom is fragile, requiring constant vigilance in the face of its adversaries. *Combat Illustrated* could not agree more. It urges us to defend our freedom with bayonets and survival knives ("these useful weapons should be added to any concerned urban citizen's private arsenal"); the AR-7 explorer ("ideal for sniping, hunting . . . and surviving"); new holsters ("for pros"), and, that old standby, the sawed-off shotgun ("a weapon that has many advantages in any sort of fight").

Against whom must freedom be defended? In case readers are not especially sensitive to subtle racism, *Combat Illustrated* opts for the blatant variety. The issue I read contained the first in a series devoted to urban trouble spots, in this case East Los Angeles ("Chicano gangs are notoriously insular, even as gangs go. They are often completely unaware of the beach, the mountains, or even any other neighborhood in Los Angeles"). A picture of an airline hijacking—accompanying, in a way I did not quite understand, a story on massive urban conflict—not only features a sufficiently angry black criminal but then identifies him in the caption as "black" and "extremely violent." Every shooter pictured in the issue, and there are quite a few, is a white male, though, to be fair, a few are wearing masks. *Combat Illustrated*, like America itself, is given to a vulgar Hobbism. If life is nasty, brutish and short, this magazine is one of its house organs.

Liberty, of course, has its enemies abroad as well, and these magazines have their own theory of international relations. David E. Steele, "close combat" editor of *Combat Illustrated*, believes, with Richard Nixon, that World War III has been taking place since 1945. *Soldier of Fortune* is as anti-Communist as Jerry Falwell. The issue I read featured an interview with a firearms inventor from an undisclosed Communist country, pseudonymously identified as Herr Hummel. After discussing how our freedom-fighting friend faces instant death from the state for building his rifle, *Soldier of Fortune* asks him, "Why did you make it?" "I made it because I wanted to make it," he responded. Never has the meaning of freedom been so simply and eloquently stated. America, as *Gung Ho* notes, may be run by pacifists and Marxists, but at least in the Communist countries defenders of freedom live on, underground there as, alas, they must be underground here.

Like equality and liberty, justice does not come easy, but the gun, at least, makes it come easier. It is a rough form



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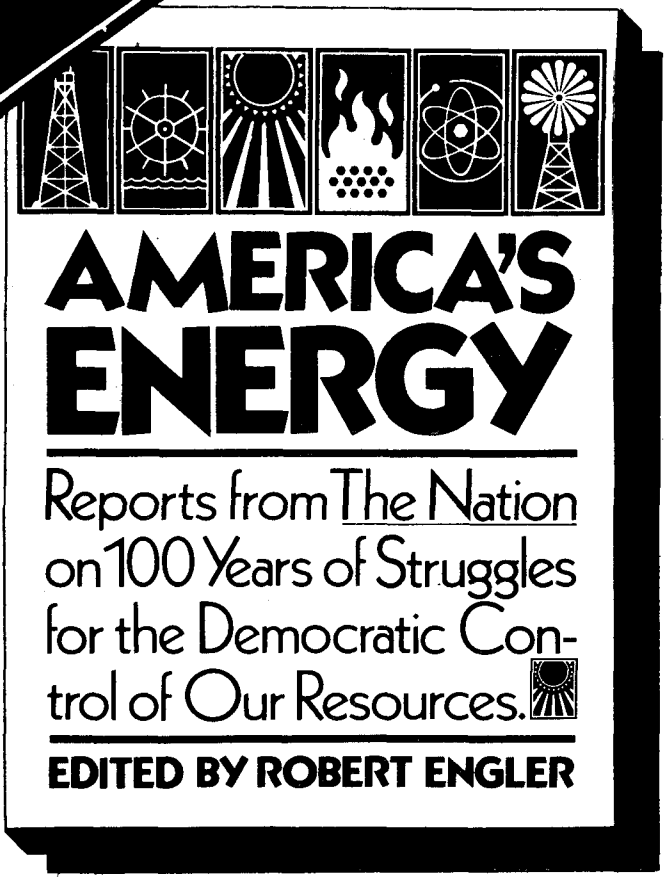

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of justice that these magazines preach, but isn't rough justice better than none at all? Regular features of *Soldier of Fortune* are the combat and adventure stories from readers (500 words or less) used in two columns, "It Happened to Me" and "I Was There." Charles Sasser was a policeman in Miami during the 1968 Republican Convention. Riots and looting everywhere. The Mob was attacking the State. Sasser's job was to defend justice by making sure that the latter won. He did it by shooting people: "The silence that followed was almost startling. The man I shot rose to his feet. Gas clouds swirled around his knees as he staggered out to the street. A splotch of blood stained his chest. He sank slowly to his knees and died." It may not have been pretty but can anyone deny that it was just?

Women, according to a recent issue of *The New York Times*, are picking up the gun as much as men these days. "The last thing on my mind is to kill," says Karen Warshaeur as she contemplates her recently purchased .38-caliber pistol, "but if I have to, I will." Whether *The Times* is correct or not, I do not know, but I do know that if it is, these magazines have missed the phenomenon entirely. For them shooting remains a form of male bonding, the most perfect way, in an imperfect society, to achieve fraternity. In his autobiography, G. Gordon Liddy relates how touched he was when his wife, Frances, gave him as a birthday present "the finest .357 magnum revolver made." But that was nothing compared to the sense of fellowship he experienced when two old Federal Bureau of Investigation hands, Wayne Bratner and John Paul Jeter, offered to teach him their shooting tricks. "It was," said Liddy, "the chance of a lifetime."

After reading *Moby Dick*, D.H. Lawrence exclaimed: "Doom! Doom! Doom! Something seems to whisper it in the very dark trees of America. Doom!" The spirit of Ahab haunts these magazines, as it haunts America. But Ahab knew his enemy; indeed, the white whale was all too visible. Neither Americans nor these magazines seem to know what haunts them. Gun magazines are more in touch with the real America than gun banners. These publications know, almost instinctively, that doom is upon us. What they do not know, except perhaps unconsciously, is that they are among its most prescient symptoms. □

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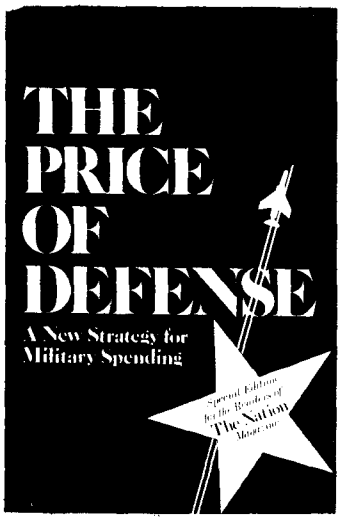

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MISCELLANEOUS

49 Biblical Contradictions, $3.00; Discovery, Box 20331-TN, West Valley City, UT 84120.

HEMM—The Equally Moral Minority. Fight religious bigotism. ONE OF THEMM button, sample newsletter, $2. Bullock, 5072 Stoneboat Row, Columbia, MD 21044.

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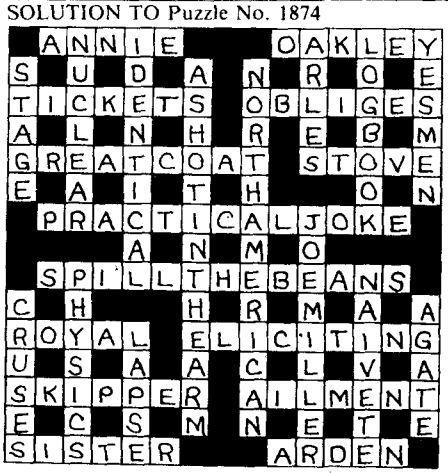
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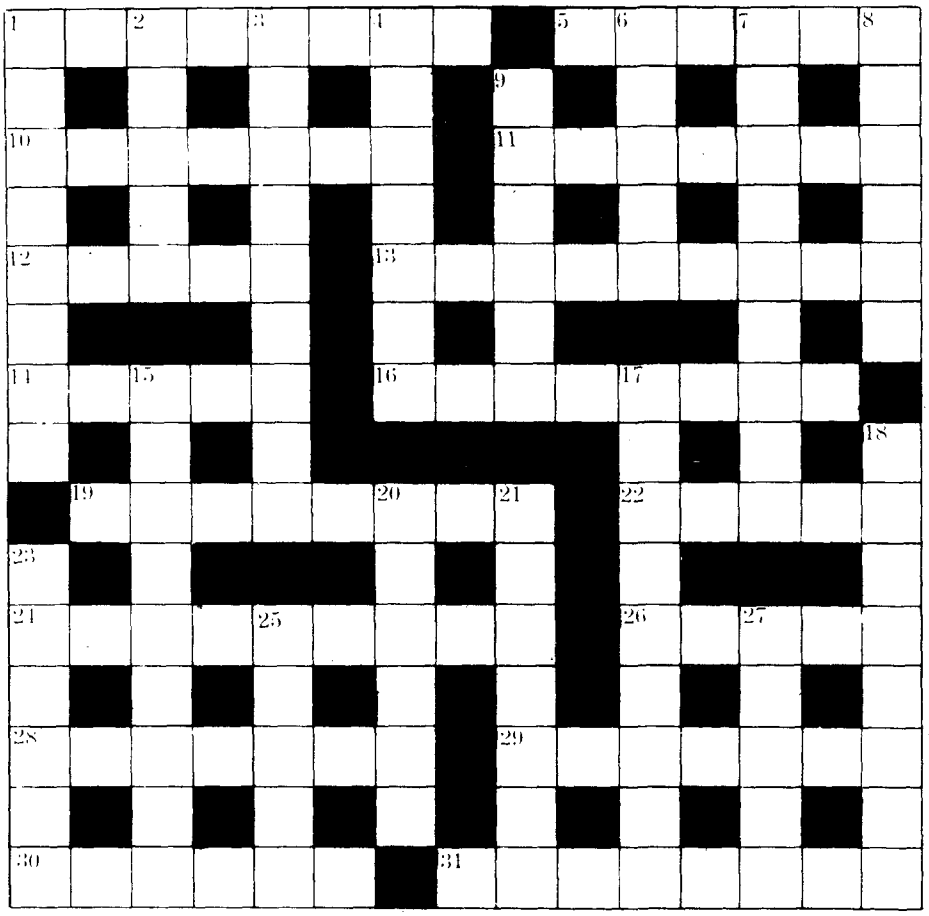

ACROSS

1 and 5 Lands on the Union side, making quite a display. (8,6)
10 Very tricky, about vulgar in fact! (Flexible, however.) (7)
11 A friend has a tale that seems endless and consonant this way, perhaps. (7)
12 Polonius got stuck behind it. (5)
13 Something to carry on a diamond, perhaps—it should be attractive. (9)
14 An opera star had it on tap, though completely backward. (5)
16 One like Broz, a backward guy, nothing but a drudge, almost. (8)
19 The cat has a way to get a ride, being smaller than most. (3,5)
22 Almost a match, of a sort. (5)
24 A controversial agent and an American writer share a drink together. (9)
26 Certainly not a loss once more! (5)
28 Opening of the door, if I center it. (7)
29 Get me a mild concoction—I may have a decision to make with it. (7)
30 and 31 Sound asleep but passed on to everybody. (4,2,3,5)

DOWN

1 and 23 A rather unusual story-book trade-in announcement, providing a potential 5. (3,5,3,3)
2 Possibly one foot of a king. (5)
3 A formation of Troop H, with a runner inside quite often seen around the old ladies. (9)
4 In this class one might be a 2, possibly paid per performance. (7)
6 The slide, being broken, doesn't work very much. (5)
7 A type of salad, in a way, might be hard to handle. (3,6)
8 and 18 Argentine flag—the country could be on it. (6,8)
9 Spring in the past, when partly crisp, ran gaily on. (6)
15 The feminine counterpart of 19, undigitalized. (9)
17 Some might recall that's where the big scuttle was—a cap's not correct when a big, bad type comes up! (5,4)
18 See 8 down
20 A wise man in our country practices such. (6)
21 Money commonly gets not quite the extent of it. (7)
23 See 1 down.
25 Not exactly grits, but some made a meal of this. (5)
27 Perhaps mailed in this? (5)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

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> —*E. P. Thompson,* The Nation, *Jan. 24, 1981*

Do you fear the new proposals for "unleashing the intelligence agencies," legalizing wiretapping, bugging and break-ins, and putting informers into anti-nuke organizations? Are you wondering why Senator Strom Thurmond has organized a new Security and Terrorism Subcommittee?

> "The danger represented by the Security and Terrorism boys is that they will move, with the support of the Administration, to legitimize the illegitimate, to make respectable that which was previously done only undercover because it was fundamentally shameful."
>
> —*Victor Navasky,* The Nation, *Feb. 14, 1981*

Are you shocked by military budgets that go higher and higher while funding disappears for legal services, health and food programs, and scholarships—in short, the programs which help the poor?

> "Masquerading as prudent economizing in the interest of all Americans suffering from inflation, the Reagan budget's real purposes are ideological, aiming to shift the burden of the society ever more unfairly onto those least able to bear them."
>
> —*Editorial,* The Nation, *April 11, 1981*

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